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STRAWBERRY
LAYER CAKE
page 64

Spring Strawberries

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table of contents

17 **Bakers Gonna Bake:** A Few of Our Favorite Things

Featuring a few of our team's favorite bakeries, books, bloggers, and more, this edition of Bakers Gonna Bake celebrates some of our most-loved things

19 **Baker Spotlight:** Spreading Frosting and Love to Underprivileged Youth

For Goodness Cakes matches volunteer bakers with youth and young adults overcoming adversity to provide birthday and graduation cakes

21 **From the Test Kitchen:** All About Browned Butter

Learn how to master browned butter through simple and easy techniques as we teach you the ins and outs of this treasured ingredient

23 **Lost and Found:** Give Cookies

A cookie conjured through love and friendship, Mary Haskell tells the history of Give Cookies, a recipe given to her by a lifelong friend, Martha Butler

25 **From the Pantry:** Strawberries

Discover the many ways to bake with strawberries and all the secrets to finding the best and freshest seasonal berries

29 **Baker Profile:** Layers of Wonder

More than just layers of decadent cake, Caroline's Cakes is a bakery full of Southern tradition trying to make the world a sweeter place

35 **Bread Box:** Eager for Easter Breads

Celebrate spring with these festive bread recipes featuring Greek Tsoureki and magical Resurrection Rolls

39 THE ESSENTIAL . . . BRIOCHE

A bread like no other, brioche is made simple and easy with our step-by-step guide. Plus, there's a sweet little strawberry surprise at the end that'll change the way you look at leftover bread.

49 WELCOME TO OUR NEW HOME

We showcase our new test kitchen, where we create and bake new, incredible recipes for every issue

57 STRAWBERRY SENSATIONS

Spring has sprung, and strawberry harvest season has just begun. We're sharing an irresistible quick bread, cakes, and cookies all full of this fresh, beautiful fruit.

65 AROUND THE WORLD IN FLATBREADS

Travel with us around the world as we uncover how different countries—from Colombia to China—bake and use flatbreads

75 A NEW SEASON OF SPRING CAKES

We share four stunning and delectable seasonal cakes, featuring bright flavors perfect for any springtime celebration

85 A THESSALONIKI BAKERY TOUR

Travel with us to Greece as we explore and learn about the thriving Greek bakery scene

97 HARMONY OF HERBS

Bright, savory, and bursting with fresh herbs, this collection of herbaceous and flavorful savory bakes brings the herb garden straight to your table

105 **Origin of a Classic:** Baklava

Explore the contested past of baklava, a flaky and layered dessert as full of history as it is rich flavor

109 **Small Batch:** Hummingbird Scones

Spectacularly portioned for four and bursting with spring flavors, these Hummingbird Scones take the classic banana and pineapple pairing to new, delicious levels

111 **Fast-Fix Baking:** Jessie's Time-Saving Spring Cakes

When you want cake without the hassle, try Jessie's decadent hot fudge cake or bright lemon snacking cake

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4¼	**cups (540 grams) bread flour**
2	**tablespoons (24 grams) granulated sugar**
1	**tablespoon (9 grams) kosher salt**
1	**cup (240 grams) warm whole milk (100°F/38°C to 110°F/43°C)**
2	**tablespoons (42 grams) honey**
2	**(0.25-ounce) packages (14 grams) Platinum Yeast**
½	**cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, melted**
2	**large eggs (100 grams), room temperature and divided**
1	**large egg yolk (19 grams), room temperature**
10	**ounces (284 grams) Gruyère cheese**
1	**pound (454 grams) sliced ham***
½	**cup (120 grams) Dijon mustard**
1	**tablespoon (15 grams) water**

Garnish: flaked sea salt, cracked black pepper

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat flour, sugar, and kosher salt at low speed until combined.

2. In a small bowl, stir together warm milk, honey, and yeast. Let stand until foamy, 5 to 10 minutes.

3. Add yeast mixture, melted butter, 1 egg (50 grams), and egg yolk to flour mixture, and beat at low speed until a shaggy dough forms, 1 to 2 minutes. Switch to the dough hook attachment, and beat at medium speed until a smooth, elastic dough forms, 12 to 14 minutes.

4. Spray a large bowl with cooking spray. Place dough in bowl, turning to grease top. Cover and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°F/24°C) until doubled in size, 45 minutes to 1 hour.

5. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.

6. Cut cheese into sticks (about 2x⅛ inches each). Cut ham slices in half widthwise.

7. Punch down dough. On a lightly floured surface, divide dough in half (about 510 grams each). Roll half of dough into a 14-inch circle. (Keep remaining dough covered with plastic wrap to prevent it from drying out.) Cut dough into 12 equal triangles.

8. Spread 1 teaspoon (5 grams) mustard in center of each triangle; place 1 piece of cheese and 1 piece of ham at center of base, folding ham to fit it to base of triangle. Starting from base, roll up dough around ham and cheese. Place rolls, pointed side down, at least 1½ inches apart on prepared pans. Repeat with remaining dough, remaining mustard, remaining cheese, and remaining ham. Cover and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°F/24°C) until puffed, about 45 minutes.

9. Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C).

10. In a small bowl, whisk together 1 tablespoon (15 grams) water and remaining 1 egg (50 grams). Lightly brush rolls with egg wash, and garnish with sea salt and pepper, if desired.

11. Bake until golden brown, about 10 minutes. Best served warm. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

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WELCOMING A SPRING FULL OF CELEBRATION

As winter comes to a close and we shift into sweeter, sunnier days, we bakers begin to reap the rewards of the first seasonal strawberries, fresh herbs, and bakes fit for a spring celebration. With this issue full of flavors and features both familiar and new, we can't wait to revel in all the fun that spring is sure to bring.

We start this issue with one of my favorite golden ingredients, browned butter, in our From the Test Kitchen feature. We share every tip, trick, and tool for getting a beautiful *beurre noisette* every time. And speaking of the test kitchen, we couldn't be more excited to show you our new home base and state-of-the-art test kitchen space, housed in our new office that we lovingly refer to as the Hoffice on 2nd. The behind-the-scenes feature in this issue is our way of sharing our beautiful new space with all of you. Our March/April issue also celebrates the start of one of our favorite seasons: spring strawberries! From deliciously sweet and salty Strawberry Pretzel Thumbprint Cookies (page 62) to our gorgeous cover star, Strawberry Layer Cake (page 64), this feature is full of bright, berry-filled bakes. If you're looking for even more cake inspiration, our Easter cakes feature covers all the classics, from coconut cake to carrot. Fresh herbs also get their time in the sun with our Harmony of Herbs feature. The Sage Browned Butter Biscuits (page 100) are savory and entirely satisfying, and our Chicken Pot Pie Danish (page 103) give the pot pie a revolutionary remake.

These pages also promise plenty of adventure, with flatbreads from around the world and a bakery tour with our dear friend Kylie Mazon-Chambers from *Cooking with Cocktail Rings*. With the help of some friends, we share recipes and stories for flatbreads from Greece, India, Colombia, and China. And our bakery tour with Kylie takes us to Thessaloniki, Greece, a beautiful port city with plenty of seaside charm and a spectacular bakery scene. We even share a couple Greek-inspired recipes for some of our favorite treats we enjoyed on the trip. Needless to say, it was a phyllo and feta fiesta!

Seeing these features has me all the more excited for the adventures to come this year. As I begin to think about all the *Bake from Scratch* retreats planned for 2023, I can't help but reminisce a little, too. In 2022, we traveled near and far, bringing together amazing groups of bakers all over the world.

Ryeland House Cookery

BALLYMALOE COOKERY SCHOOL

We started our year with a visit to Ireland in March. The Emerald Isle was a dream, with acres upon acres of green pastures, fields of sheep, towering stone castles, and quaint seaside towns galore. Starting in the capital of Northern Ireland, Belfast, bakers got a chance to bake at Tracey's Farmhouse Kitchen, dine at Rayanne House to enjoy the historic *Titanic* menu, and stop in at Lazy Claire Patisserie to get their fix of French-inspired pastries. From there, the bakery tour continued in Dublin, with visits to two of the city's best-known bakeries, Bread 41 and Pepper Pot Cafe. Then we took to the winding countryside roads, with baking at Ballymaloe Cookery School and Ryeland House Cookery School outside Kilkenny, visits to Waterford and Galway, and a grand finale at the storied and majestic Ashford Castle. Along the way, bakers learned to make quintessential Irish recipes, including scones and soda bread, while also learning regional recipes such as potato farls.

Our next retreat kept us a little closer to home with our Cake Baking Retreat in Minneapolis, Minnesota, home to Nordic Ware and the Bundt pan. We learned the ins and outs of Bundt cake baking at the source, and our partners, Swans Down and Nordic Ware, provided the most beautiful bakeware and cake flour, taking our cake baking to a new level. Bakers also learned how to successfully build and decorate layer cakes, an art form all its own. From baking at Cooks of Crocus Hill St. Paul to touring the Nordic Ware factory for a behind-the-scenes look at how Bundt pans are made, it was truly a celebration of all things cake.

Lyon
Thierry Rodolphe
Chef
Lyon

Birmingham
bake

Next was our journey to France in the fall. Beginning in Lyon, home to lively *boucheries* and specialties such as *pâté en croûte*, attendees headed to Plum Lyon, where they learned how to make *les religieuses*, a delightful vintage pâte à choux pastry filled with wonderfully rich *crème pâtissière* and topped with *craquelin* and fondant. Les Halles de Lyon Paul Bocuse, a gastronomic destination in Lyon, was another essential stop. There, we tried Lyon's famous pralines, then took a trip to chef Thierry Rodolphe's restaurant in Vieux Lyon, where lunch was followed by a *pâté en croûte* baking workshop. Next, we traveled to Aix-en-Provence, where we explored the markets of southern France and strolled along the iconic Cours Mirabeau. The trip ended with two days of baking at Provence Gourmet, where bakers got to work with fresh, local ingredients to make a Provençal classic, *gibassier*, as well as peach clafoutis, tomato tartlets, and rustic loaves of bread. Making friends, memories, and a lot of baked goods, this trip was pure magic.

Like a retreat family reunion, our Birmingham Holiday Baking Retreat brought bakers from far and wide to share in the merriment as we introduced our new "Hoffice" in downtown Birmingham, Alabama, and baked our way through an array of festive bakes perfect for the holiday season. From make-ahead cranberry pecan pumpkin muffins to a showstopping peppermint bark twist on entremet cake, our bakers got to call our shiny new test kitchen home for the weekend. Schermer Pecans, Mariani, and Swans Down supplied our bakers with only the finest fresh pecans, dried cranberries, and cake flour, adding unmatched flavor and texture to all that they baked. And, using tools and pans from Williams Sonoma and Nordic Ware, our team and attendees were able to bake with the gold standard of Bundt pans and bakeware. Plus, a stay at the historic Elyton Hotel just a couple of blocks away meant bakers could explore all the Magic City has to offer. Full of fun, laughs, incredible kitchen tips, and friendships new and old, our Birmingham Baking Retreat was the perfect celebration of our new space.

We closed out 2022 with our Holiday Baking Retreat in London and Paris, where we witnessed the magic of Europe during the yuletide season firsthand. Streets, cafés, and holiday markets were festively adorned, painting a glorious winter wonderland backdrop for our trip. From hands-on classes showcasing classic British holiday recipes to baking alongside our friend Benjamina Ebuehi, cookbook author, food stylist, and *The Great British Bake Off* quarterfinalist, we were able to make breads, pastries, and more at Leiths School of Food and Wine and La Cuisine Paris, two cookery schools that are practically a home away from home for our team. We even got to visit with Julie Jones, whose pies and pastry are true works of art. With incredible lessons from amazing teachers, pastry chefs, and friends, everyone left with a rich knowledge of French and British holiday traditions and recipes.

In 2023, we can't wait to continue these beautiful baking adventures. I hope to bake with you this year.

Happy baking,

Brian

Brian Hart Hoffman
Editor-in-Chief

bake
FROM SCRATCH

Announcing our 2023

BAKING RETREATS

It's time to take an adventure the *Bake from Scratch* way.

Our 2023 baking retreats will satisfy the wanderlust cravings of the most intrepid bakers. You'll learn techniques from top baking instructors, travel to areas with rich culinary traditions, and make new baking friends along the way.

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All you need to do is pack your bags—the aprons will be waiting for you.

For all of the delicious details on these retreats and to register, email *events@bakefromscratch.com*.
To stay up-to-date on our baking retreat announcements, sign up for our newsletter, PreHeat!

RECIPE INDEX

BARS AND COOKIES
Give Cookies **24**
Strawberry Pretzel Thumbprint Cookies **62**

BREADS
Brioche à Tête **45**
Brioche au Sucre **47**
Brioche Loaf **44**
Chèvre and Herb Quick Bread **102**
Essential Brioche Dough **42**
Greek Pita Bread **72**
Ham and Gruyère Crescent Rolls **5**
Herbes de Provence No-Knead Bread **102**
Hummingbird Scones **109**
Resurrection Rolls **38**
Roasted Strawberry Bread **61**
Sage Browned Butter Biscuits **100**
Tsoureki **37**

CAKES
Banoffee Cake **79**
Blackberry Lime Cake **33**
Carrot Cake **79**
Easter Hot Fudge Pudding Cake **113**
Lemon Snacking Cake with Lemon Glaze **113**
Milk Chocolate Sheet Cake **84**
Southern Coconut Cake **83**
Strawberry Layer Cake **64**
Strawberry Pecan Coffee Cake **63**

FROSTINGS, FILLINGS, GARNISHES, AND GLAZES
Blackberry Coulis **34**
Blackberry Italian Buttercream **34**
Browned Butter Frosting **79**
Caramelized Bananas **80**
Coconut Swiss Meringue Buttercream **83**
Cream Cheese Frosting **79**
Cream Cheese Glaze **62**
Honey Syrup **107**
Lemon Glaze **113**
Pecan Streusel **64**
Vanilla Bean Buttercream **64**
Vanilla Cream Cheese Glaze **109**
Whipped Chocolate Frosting **84**

MISCELLANEOUS
9-Layer Chinese Scallion Pancakes **69**
Cheesy Corn Arepas **68**
Roasted Strawberries **62**
Schezwan Aloo Parathas **73**
Strawberry Quick Jam **64**

PASTRIES, PIES, AND TARTS
Baklava **107**
Bougatsa **91**
Chicken Pot Pie Danish **103**
Patouda **95**
Rough Puff Pastry **103**
Spanakopita **90**
Strawberry Bostock **48**

on the cover
Strawberry Layer Cake
page 64

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MARY BETH JONES

bake
FROM SCRATCH
49 Recipes to Celebrate Spring
Spring Strawberries

RESOURCES

Baker Spotlight
Page 19
Photography courtesy of For Goodness Cakes

RECIPE CORRECTION
While we aim for perfection with each of our recipes, we do make the occasional mistake. Here is a correction from a recent issue.

JANUARY/FEBRUARY ISSUE 2023:
Cover: recipe development by Leah Perez
Chocolate-Almond Sweet Rolls (page 5)
In step 4: In a small bowl, mix together brown sugar, ground almonds, cinnamon, remaining **½ cup (113 grams)** (instead of ⅓ cup [76 grams]) butter, and remaining 3 tablespoons cocoa.

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FROM BAKING BLOGGERS TO FUN AND FUNKY ACCESSORIES, THESE ARE JUST A FEW OF THE THINGS OUR TEAM CAN'T GET ENOUGH OF

INSPIRED EARRINGS

Test kitchen assistant Becca Cummins wore a pair of these earrings during our 2022 Birmingham Baking Retreat, and it was love at first sight. **KIKAY**, a Los Angeles-based brand owned by duo Bella and Quinn (friends of Becca's), started as a small business run out of Bella and Quinn's college housing and has grown to become so much more. Each earring and accessory is made by hand, and the bold, beautiful designs are sure to wow. I Could've Dropped My Croissant!, made to look like a set of boulangerie-ready croissants, and Mix It Up, which allows you to wear your most tried-and-true kitchen accessory, are two designs we absolutely love.

AVAILABLE AT: *kikay.shop*

Becca

A BAKERY ADVENTURE ABROAD

Reflecting on visits to see her brother in Barcelona, Spain, editorial assistant Christina Fleisch reminisces over one bakery in particular: **Flor de Gracia**. With cases filled with standard pastry fare like almond croissants and beautifully twirled cinnamon rolls, the sweets at this bakery are just one aspect of this local favorite. It's the bread-baking that makes this spot extraordinary. Bubbly-topped focaccia and fougasse filled with olives and rosemary are among some of the varied offerings, and every day sees a new variety of bread featured. If you'd like to enjoy as the locals do, be sure to grab an espresso as well.

GO THERE:
Carrer de Bruniquer, 9,
08012 Barcelona, Spain

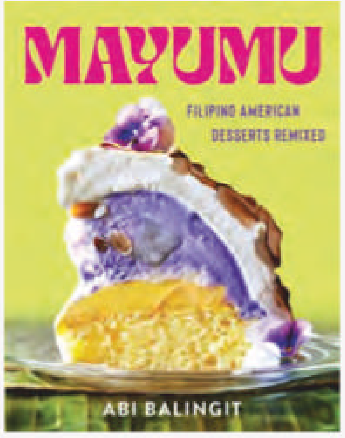
FOLLOW: @flor.de.gracia

GLUTEN-FREE GUIDANCE

Our senior copy editor, Meg Lundberg, has celiac disease and therefore must stick to a very strict gluten-free lifestyle. When she can't use a 1-to-1 gluten-free flour blend in place of the wheat flour called for in our recipes, she turns to bloggers. She says, "I follow bloggers who are super helpful, especially one called ***The Gluten Free Austrian*** (*theglutenfreeaustrian.com*). Daniela has celiac, she's a professionally trained pastry chef, and when I was first diagnosed in late 2020 and trying to bake again, she actually answered my DMs on Instagram (@austrianwithwuff) and was so kind." ***The Loopy Whisk*** (*theloopywhisk.com*) is another of her favorites, and the blogger behind it, Katarina Cermelj, authored a cookbook, *Baked to Perfection: Delicious Gluten-Free Recipes with a Pinch of Science* (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2021), with recipes for everything from crusty breads to showstopping layer cakes. Both bakers can't be missed and are sure to help those experienced in and new to gluten-free baking.

Daniela
of The Gluten Free Austrian

Katarina
of The Loopy Whisk



REQUIRED READING

Full of essays and recipes celebrating author Abi Balingit's Filipino American heritage and journey of self-discovery, ***Mayumu: Filipino American Desserts Remixed*** (HarperCollins, 2023) incorporates flavors both new and familiar. From chocolate chip cookies seasoned with adobo to molten lava cakes made with ube, each recipe is equal parts inventive and delicious. Abi is also the blogger behind *The Dusky Kitchen*, home to even more irresistible Filipino- and American-inspired bakes.

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FOR GOODNESS CAKES, A NONPROFIT QUICKLY EXPANDING ITS EFFORTS ACROSS THE US, HOPES TO FOSTER OPTIMISM AND CONFIDENCE IN CHILDREN AND ADULTS UP TO AGE 27 BY MATCHING CAKE-BAKING VOLUNTEERS WITH THOSE IN NEED FOR BIRTHDAYS, GRADUATIONS, AND MORE. CANDICE DOMINGUEZ-SUNDQUIST, THE LEADER OF THE PORTLAND, OREGON, CHAPTER OF FOR GOODNESS CAKES, SPEAKS ON WHY EFFORTS LIKE THIS ARE SUCH A POWERFUL SOURCE OF POSITIVE CHANGE.

How did For Goodness Cakes begin?
Candice Dominguez-Sundquist: It started back in 2016 when our cofounder Jaime Lehman delivered four bakes to her local agency. Since then, we're up to more than 25 chapters across the country. [The Portland, Oregon, chapter] is actually new, so we just had our first birthday, and we're really excited to be here. We did over 400 [cakes] in our first year coming out of a pandemic. So, it's wild, and it also speaks to the need. We wouldn't be here if there wasn't a need. It's great and amazing and also a little bittersweet because we know that these kids are in need of this. They're so excited and so grateful because it isn't about the cake, per se. It's [about] being acknowledged. Somebody is seeing them.

What makes For Goodness Cakes unique?
CDS: A unique thing about us is that every single cake is personalized. All the details are requested for each individual cake. We also do demos for volunteers, so if somebody wants to show us a skill that they think they're pretty good at and film it, they can. We have a series called Cultural Bakes where we look at different bakes from around the world, and somebody who is pretty good at it or has some history with it shows us the ins and outs. There are different ways to contribute in a baking way without just sending us a cake.

What are your goals for the Portland Metro chapter?
CDS: In a perfect world, no youth overcoming adversity would exist; everybody would be good to go. Everyone would have a cake. That's a lifelong goal. Next year, I'd like to see our volunteer base, as well as the number of bakes we deliver, increase. We are piloting a baking buddies program here in Portland, a hands-on demo for youths. Maybe we'll ignite little mini bakers, igniting this passion inside them and something that they can do as a hobby, maybe even turn into something professionally when they become legal adults. We really just want to give them this lifelong impact and something they can take with them.

Can you tell me about a specific time your chapter was able to help someone and how it impacted their life? Why did this memory stick with you?
CDS: One of our first few cakes was for a young boy who had been recently put into foster care around his birthday and was having a tough time. Somebody asked him about birthday cake ideas and what kind of characters he liked, and he told them that he really wanted a Hulk cake or a Spider-Man cake. A volunteer baked an amazing cake with a Hulk figure on it. He got his cake, and a caseworker said he just lit up and he started telling everybody about the cake and making sure everybody saw the cake and offering the cake to everybody. And it just really changed his whole perception. He was so just so elated and so excited. And it was the first time that they had seen any type of joy out of him in quite a while.

To learn more about For Goodness Cakes and how you can help, head over to *forgoodnesscakes.org*. Donations are always appreciated, and bakers are always needed!

Learn more from the comfort of your own home in **Baking School.**

Join *Bake from Scratch* magazine and Williams Sonoma for a virtual baking class series that will boost your confidence in the kitchen. In each class, Brian Hart Hoffman will share baking tips, tricks, and recipes that you will want to re-create at home for family and friends!

Purchase your ticket at *williams-sonoma.squadup.com*

UPCOMING CLASSES

FEBRUARY 20: French Baking Month: French Cakes with Brian Hart Hoffman and Aleksandra Crapanzano

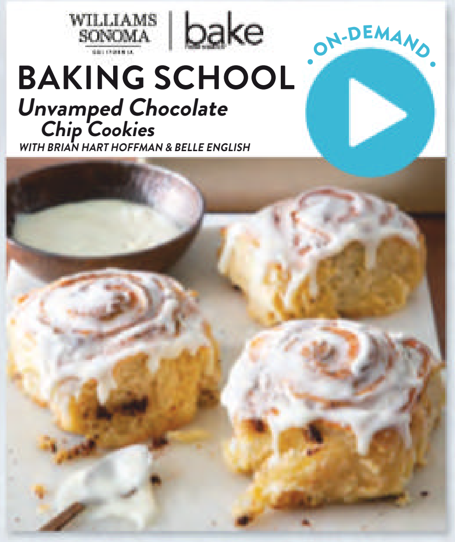
FEBRUARY 27: Williams Sonoma Test Kitchen Favorites with Brian Hart Hoffman and Belle English

MARCH 6: All About Buttercream with Brian Hart Hoffman

MARCH 13: Baking School In-Depth: Limoncello Cake with Italian Meringue Buttercream with Brian Hart Hoffman

MARCH 20: Two Ways with Phyllo: Baklava and Spanakopita with Brian Hart Hoffman

MISSED A BAKING SCHOOL CLASS?


WILLIAMS SONOMA
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BAKING SCHOOL
Unvamped Chocolate Chip Cookies
WITH BRIAN HART HOFFMAN & BELLE ENGLISH

Upvamped Chocolate Chip Cookies

WILLIAMS SONOMA
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BAKING SCHOOL
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Breakfast Baking

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Apple Pie Baking
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Apple Pie Baking

View past classes at *bakefromscratch.com/ondemand*

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CALIFORNIA

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ALL ABOUT BROWNED BUTTER

LIQUID GOLD IN THE BAKING WORLD, BROWNED BUTTER IS THE NUTTY, CARAMEL-COLORED INGREDIENT THAT'LL TAKE ALL YOUR BAKES TO THE NEXT LEVEL. THIS GUIDE WILL HAVE YOU MAKING SERIOUSLY SIMPLE BROWNED BUTTER—RADIANT WITH FLAVOR—LIKE A PRO IN NO TIME.

FIRST OFF, WHAT IS IT?

Butter is made up of milk fat, water, and milk solids. Most American butters sit at about 80% milk fat, 18% water, and 2% milk solids. European-style butters are required to contain 82% milk fat or higher, which means that they'll ultimately have a lower water content. When you brown butter, you're doing two things. First, you're cooking off all the water. All that bubbling and fizzing that occurs when you're making browned butter is the water cooking out and evaporating. Because European-style butter contains less water than American butter, it'll typically cook a little quicker. And second, you're browning the milk solids. The browned milk solids are what give browned butter its signature golden hue and nutty flavor.

THE TOOLS

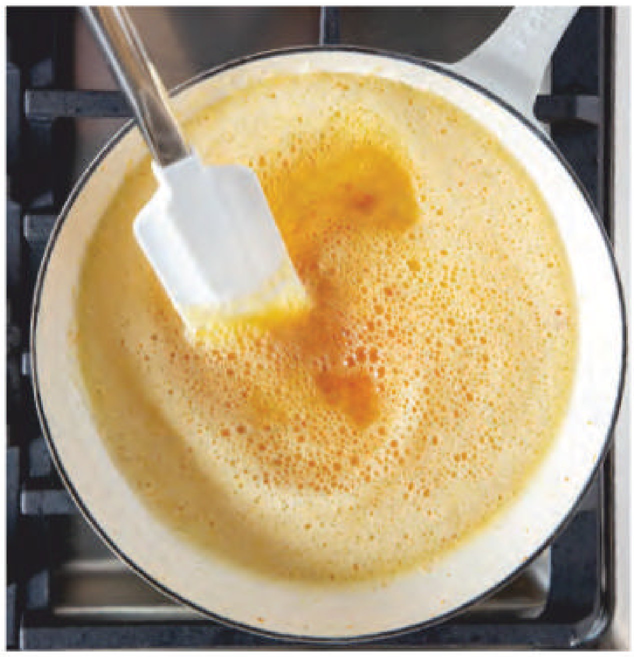
The Pan: You'll want to use a light-colored pan. The contrast will allow you to see the butter browning more clearly.

The Stirrer: Swirling the pan or stirring with a silicone spatula is typically the best way to keep the butter moving so heat is distributed evenly. A whisk also works well.

The Heat: On an electric cooktop, browned butter will take a little bit more time. A gas range supplies steady, even heat, while electric cooktops often cycle heat.

HOW IT'S MADE

Once your butter starts browning, it's on the fast track to potentially getting burnt. So, it's important that your stove doesn't go above medium heat and you have a heatproof bowl or container ready to pour it into once it's done.



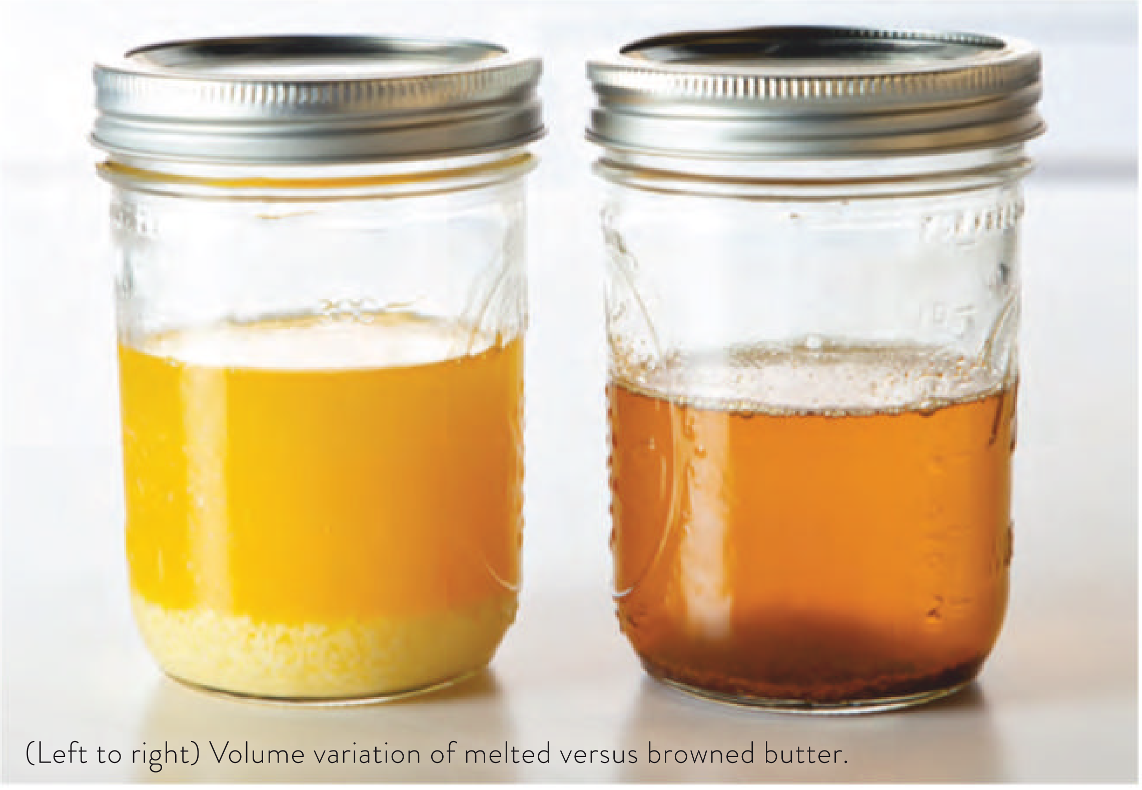
THE TECHNIQUE

1. In a medium light-colored skillet, melt butter over medium heat. Cook, stirring or swirling skillet frequently, until butter turns a medium-brown color and has a nutty aroma.
The time this takes will vary depending on the amount of butter you're browning, but typically, this will take about 10 minutes for 1 to 2 cups (227 to 454 grams) of butter. What's most important is that you keep an eye on your pan. The butter will very quickly go from browned to burnt, so err on the side of caution: remove the pan from the heat to stir, let the foam subside, and check on the color as it gets closer to being done.

2. Remove from heat, and pour into a heatproof bowl. Let cool completely. Cover and refrigerate for up to 2 weeks.
The second you think your browned butter is done, remove it from the heat and pour it into a bowl or container; even the residual heat of your pan or stovetop could be enough to burn the milk solids.

A VARIATION IN VOLUME

When you make browned butter, you're cooking off the butter's water content. If water makes up about 18% of a stick of butter, that means that browned butter will reduce in volume and weight by at least 18%, if not more. For example, 100 grams of butter will reduce to about 80 grams of browned butter.



(Left to right) Volume variation of melted versus browned butter.

WHAT ABOUT CLARIFIED BUTTER AND GHEE?

Neither clarified butter nor ghee contains the milk solids necessary to make browned butter. Clarified butter is pure butterfat, with no water or milk solids. Meanwhile, ghee is cooked a little longer than clarified butter to remove all the moisture and brown the milk solids (not to the same degree as browned butter) before they're strained out.

MAKE-AHEAD MAGIC

Many of our recipes call for browned butter that's been cooled, so feel free to make a batch ahead of time and store it in your refrigerator so you can have browned butter on the fly. Excellent for baking and cooking in both sweet and savory applications, it's a wonder ingredient that'll turn buttery dishes and bakes from delicious to decadent.

GIVE COOKIES

ONE OF OUR MOST DEDICATED READERS, MARY HELEN HASKELL, SHARES THE STORY BEHIND A DEAR FRIEND'S RECIPE AND THE FRIENDSHIP THEY SHARED

Family can go far beyond the family you're born into, and Mary Haskell's story of finding a lifelong friend who became a part of her found family sounds almost serendipitous looking back.

Give Cookies are what I call a legacy recipe. It was given to me by my best friend Martha Keith Butler. Martha's story of the recipe is that it was given to her mother, Alice Lloyd Adamson Keith, by a friend. Now, Alice was born in late 1880s or early 1890s, as I recall, so this is a forever recipe. Martha was born and bred in Nashville, Tennessee, moving to Memphis, Tennessee, for husband Bill's State Farm job. From there, they moved to Bloomington, Illinois, where we became friends through our church and, as she once remarked, "like the sisters we never had."

The original recipe called for coconut—true to the South—which we deleted because I am allergic to coconut. It also called for creaming first [and] then whisking the dry together before adding. No matter what we were baking, we always whisked together the dry ingredients first so our creamed mixture did not have to sit while we measured and whisked. Martha used to just use a spoon to drop the cookies but was soon using cookie scoops for everything. Give Cookies are really easy and quick to bake. Martha's daughter Ginger, who still lives in Bloomington-Normal, says she remembers she and her sister, Karen, helping their mother make Give Cookies around Christmastime.

– Mary Helen Haskell as told to Chessa Parker

GIVE COOKIES

Makes about 30 cookies

Crisp on the outside, soft on the inside, this vintage recipe can be traced back to the early 1900s. Simple, easy, and filled with buttery flavor, Give Cookies are a recipe shared in difficult and joyous times, as well as everyday family moments. Shared by two best friends, these cookies have withstood the test of time, with history and love baked into every bite.

1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter
1 cup (200 grams) granulated sugar
1 cup (220 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar*
2 large eggs (100 grams)
1 teaspoon (4 grams) pure vanilla extract
2 cups (250 grams) all-purpose flour
1½ cups (120 grams) old-fashioned oats
1 cup (96 grams) pecan flour*
1 teaspoon (5 grams) baking powder
1 teaspoon (5 grams) baking soda
1 teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line 4 (18x13-inch) baking sheets with parchment paper.

2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and sugars at medium speed until light and fluffy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in vanilla.

3. In a medium bowl, whisk together all-purpose flour, oats, pecan flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. Add flour mixture to butter mixture, and beat at low speed until combined. Scoop dough by 2 tablespoonfuls, and place 3 inches apart on prepared pans.

4. Bake, one pan at a time, until edges are golden, 12 to 13 minutes. Let cool on pans for 5 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on a wire rack.

**We used C&H® Light Brown Sugar and Schermer Pecans Pecan Flour.*

To see the original recipe, visit *bakefromscratch.com/lost-found-give-cookies.*

STRAWBERRIES

THE SECRETS BEHIND FINDING THE BEST STRAWBERRIES, AND OUR FAVORITE WAYS TO BAKE WITH THEM

BY OLIVIA KAVANAGH

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JIM BATHIE
STYLING BY MARY BETH JONES

A signal of spring in the southern US and summer in the northern US, strawberries are the sweet harbinger of warmer temperatures and longer days of sunshine soon to come. Whether enjoyed fresh, macerated, cooked in jams and jellies, or roasted, strawberries are a staple for a reason. With its sweet and almost floral aroma, bright red color, and sugary, juicy interior, this flavorful and versatile fruit turns cakes, quick breads, cookies, and more into irresistibly fresh and fruity bakes. But the strawberry requires special attention to preparation and seasonality in order to truly capture the utmost flavor.

Strawberries are the product of flowering plants in the *Fragaria* genus, which belongs to the Rosaceae family, or rose family. Oddly enough, it's not the commonly believed white and red flesh of the berry that is scientifically considered the fruit, but the brownish or whitish specks, called achenes, which are commonly considered seeds, that are the true fruits, each surrounding a tiny seed. Strawberries grow as a perennial in many climates, meaning that after planting, they'll reappear and keep producing fruit for at least two to three years. Beyond that, there are three main categories of strawberry: June-bearing, the most common in the US; everbearing, which produces fruit two to three separate times in the season, once in mid-spring and later in the summer and/or early fall; and day-neutral, which tends to be a hardier variety that can withstand colder temperatures and less sunshine but also tends to have less flavor. Between these three varieties, there's little difference in appearance, but understanding seasonality is key to getting the best berry.

Because the US is made up of so many climatically different regions, growing seasons vary greatly. In the Midwest and Northern states, strawberries aren't usually planted until April or May, whereas in Southern states like Florida, planting can begin in winter. For that reason, strawberries grown in the South are usually at peak harvest season in late March, April, and early May, whereas strawberries grown in the Midwest and North aren't typically ready for harvest until June at the earliest. Even June-bearing varieties will reach peak harvest season in the South in late April and early May, despite their name suggesting otherwise. June-bearing and everbearing strawberry plants are affected by temperatures, climate zone, and day length, typically starting to flower once days are 12 hours or longer. On the other hand, day-neutral strawberries do not require any specific day length to begin producing fruit, but they're typically more susceptible to high heat preventing fruit production or even killing them. Everbearing plants are also at risk in high heat, meaning that everbearing and day-neutral plants are often best suited to cooler, milder climates.

In baking, it's no secret that fresh is best. With unmatched flavor and texture, fresh strawberries can be a game changer. And in recipes with limited or no bake time, they're truly the best option. In cake and quick bread batters, the weight of these fresh, juicy berries can often lead to the fruit sinking. To prevent this, we recommend three things: First, make sure that after your fruit has been washed, you delicately pat it dry. Any excess moisture in or on the strawberry has the potential to create gummy pockets around the fruit. Second, when slicing your fruit, try to get the pieces as uniform in size as possible. Doing this will ensure that the fruit all cooks to the same level of tenderness and prevents any larger chunks from sinking. Third, if

Flavorful Pairings

Strawberries certainly know how to take center stage in a recipe, but they also play well with others. Here are some of our favorite strawberry sidekicks:

- Vanilla
- Chocolate
- Lemon or Lime
- Almond
- Banana
- Balsamic vinegar
- Other berries (blueberries, raspberries, and more)
- Herbs (basil, mint, thyme, lavender, rosemary)

the strawberries seem particularly juicy or watery, a light coating of flour can help to absorb some of the liquid and keep the strawberries suspended in the batter. If moisture isn't a worry and you find your berries need a little added sweetness, maceration might be the key. To macerate strawberries, you'll wash, hull, and slice them and then mix them with a little bit of granulated sugar and let them stand for at least 30 minutes. As they sit, the strawberries will begin to release some of their natural juices, softening the berries slightly and creating a deliciously sweet strawberry syrup as well.

Another method of incorporating beautiful strawberry flavor into your bakes? Roasted strawberries! Typically sliced and mixed with a little granulated sugar before baking, a quick roast in the oven can yield exceptional, concentrated strawberry flavor and sweetness, with the bonus of slightly caramelized notes from the added and natural sugars browning in the oven. Both our Roasted Strawberry Bread (page 61) and Strawberry Layer Cake (page 64) utilize the powerful, punchy flavor of roasted strawberries.

Strawberry jams, jellies, and preserves also have you cook the strawberries with sugar to achieve a more concentrated flavor. For those who are unfamiliar with their distinctions, jelly is made with strained fruit juice and contains no pieces of fruit, jam is made with mashed fruit, and preserves contain large or whole pieces of fruit. Perfect for filling fluffy yeasted breads, spreading between cake layers, swirling into batters like in our Strawberry Pecan Coffee Cake (page 63), and even dolloping on cookies like our Strawberry Pretzel Thumbprint Cookies (page 62), jams, jellies, and preserves are a great way to get fresh strawberry flavor even when strawberries aren't in season. Plus, a large part of preparing these fruit spreads involves cooking off all the excess water in the berries, which ultimately creates a stronger strawberry flavor.

Frozen strawberries are another great option, with most fruit harvested and frozen at peak ripeness. However, in baking, frozen fruit comes with its own set of conditions. Most fruits typically sit at around 80% to 90% water. When frozen, the water in the fruit expands and breaks down the initial cell structure of the fresh fruit. Without that structure, thawed frozen berries lose the plump appearance and textural bite characteristic of fresh fruit. Frozen strawberries also have a greater potential to affect the color and texture of your bakes. Frozen strawberries often bleed more color because their natural water content and juices aren't contained by the same fortified structure as fresh fruit, creating color-streaked, tie-dyed batters. This can affect the wet-to-dry ingredient ratio in your batter as well, particularly in recipes developed using fresh fruit. To avoid these complications, you can rinse, drain, and pat dry your frozen strawberries before baking.

Most recipes will call for strawberries that have been hulled and then sliced or chopped. The hull, also sometimes referred to as the calyx, is the leafy top of the strawberry. To hull a strawberry, you simply angle a small sharp knife and cut, in a conical, circular motion, around the green leafy top of the strawberry and into the pale flesh in the center of the berry. There are also specialty strawberry hullers that use small metal claws to remove the hull and stem of the berries. In a pinch, a straw will also work if you insert it at the pointed end of the strawberry and push it through the top; this will both core and remove the hull of the strawberry. From there, you can use them fresh, macerate them, preserve them in jams and jellies, roast them, or freeze them. The star of both spring and summer, fresh strawberries are a true celebration of all there is to love about these sensational seasons.

BAKE WITH STRAWBERRIES
In this issue, don't miss:

Strawberry Bostock, page **48**

Roasted Strawberry Bread, page **61**

Strawberry Pretzel Thumbprint Cookies, page **62**

Strawberry Pecan Coffee Cake, page **63**

Strawberry Layer Cake, page **64**

A Strawberry-Buying Guide

While strawberries may be available at grocery stores year-round, it's no secret that these berries are at their best when they're in season. Here's what to look for when buying your berries.

- Strawberries growing in the South will start to reach peak harvest season around March, April, and May. In the North, look for berries in June and July. In the West, peak harvest season runs from April to July.
- Strawberries do not continue to ripen after being picked, so when buying strawberries, make sure they're already at your desired level of ripeness.
- When possible, buy local. Strawberries that are shipped greater distances are often picked when less ripe so they'll hold up better in transit to their destination, which means these berries aren't given the same amount of time to develop flavor, making for a blander, less sweet strawberry.
- When checking for freshness, one of the best indicators can be the caps of the strawberries. If the leaves are still a fresh, lively green color, the strawberries are likely fresher.
- If there's any whiteness found around the stems (often referred to as "white shoulders"), the berries were not picked at peak ripeness. Strawberries ripen from tip to stem, so any whiteness is indication of the fact that the strawberries were not given the proper amount of time to ripen on the plant. A ripe strawberry will be completely ruby red, and the darker the hue, the sweeter the strawberry.
- Small berries tend to be juicier and hold more flavor than larger ones. Bigger berries often contain more water, which dilutes the taste. So, though the larger berries might feel like a better deal and less work, the smaller berries are worth the effort.

LAYERS OF WONDER

CAROLINE'S CAKES, A CAKE BAKERY BASED IN SPARTANBURG, SOUTH CAROLINA, CELEBRATES ITS EXPANSION FROM MAIL-ORDER CAKE BUSINESS TO A SPECTACULAR NEW STOREFRONT THAT WELCOMES GUESTS TO SIT AND STAY AWHILE

BY STEPHANIE BURT / PHOTOGRAPHY BY CAROLINE'S CAKES, ERIN ADAMS, AND LAURA FRITZ

CAROLINE'S CAKES
925 BEAUMONT AVENUE
eat cake be happy

A new yellow- and white-striped awning greets visitors to the cake café at Caroline's Cakes in Spartanburg, South Carolina. While the mainly mail-order cake business has often been a bustling hive of activity on Beaumont Street, in 2022, it became a true community hub when it began welcoming visitors inside its new retail space, where guests can sample cake and sip wine or coffee.

There are details tucked into every corner of the recently refurbished building, from a collection of cake stands at the entrance to light fixtures specially designed to resemble whisks, but there's one detail above all that signifies the true nature of this nationally revered cake business: a neon sign outside CEO Richard Reutter's office that simply reads "Caroline" in cursive yellow neon.

"That's Caroline's signature, and we were able to recreate it from her own handwriting," says Richard, almost but not quite touching the glowing sign as he gestures. Despite her physical absence—founder Caroline Ragsdale Reutter passed away in 2017—her signature touches are still very much a part of this business in memory and everyday practice, and Richard, her son, is honoring her legacy with every swirl of caramel icing atop a seven-layer cake. For Richard, mail-order customers, employees, and guests to the café are all part of what he considers the "cake community."

"You can't really separate Richard from Caroline's Cakes, and those who know me know that," he says. After all, his mother served her first caramel cake at his christening in 1982, and soon, friends and neighbors were clamoring for that cake, a decadent version of an already-decadent Southern classic with seven tender yellow cake layers separated and covered by a smooth, rich caramel icing that requires a masterful hand to perfect.

For Caroline, a Lake City, South Carolina, native, the idea of a personal connection to community through cake came naturally. In the very early days, she'd serve friends and neighbors by placing a cake on a joggling board on the front porch of her home in Annapolis, Maryland, a red tin beside it for payment. She knew all the names of her customers, but as the business blossomed with word of mouth, she began to use all the burners on her stove for pots of bubbling caramel when it was time to bake, and there were plenty of people she didn't know ordering from as far away as Hawaii. So, she began enlisting baking help from another baker she knew in South Carolina to help fill the orders and then eventually opened a retail storefront in Annapolis that also shipped nationwide.

In 2012, the business relocated to Spartanburg and focused on mail order, that same signature red tin packaging now not only holding the original caramel cake but also a growing number of other confectionary classics, from red velvet to coconut, although caramel did (and still does) outsell them all. More than 2,500 cakes per week are shipped out during the busy holiday season these days, and through it all, personal relationships with customers still anchor the business as they always have.

"Our communication with our customers is our foundation and strong structure," Richard says. While many customers email or order online, Caroline's Cakes still has a phone bank of customer service specialists so those who wish to can call in their orders. There are always a few manning the phone year-round, but during the holidays, that number swells to 15, and they all have strict instructions to avoid rushing customers. There are no quotas to meet for orders taken or target length of a call to hit but, instead, an emphasis on personal service and feeling taken care of. "We share our story with them, they know us, and we get to take a special place on their tables, so they are a part of that story, too," Richard says. And at Caroline's Cakes, that even includes adding new flavors.

Caroline's extensive cookbook collection—many with her handwritten notations and flags still included—are housed in the bakery, and Richard often browses through them for creative inspiration. However, "often, customers tell us what they'd like to see added to the line," Richard says. "We've earned their respect because we do preserve these recipes and keep them alive, and they trust us to bake a cake that tastes like the one they remember."

Keeping the integrity of the recipes is often a challenge for bakeries at a high production level such as Caroline's Cakes, but this bakery has not changed the time-tested recipes from home cooks, just scaled them. The caramel is still made by hand, the scent of butter and sugar wafting out of very large copper pots but still as smooth as when Caroline made it in her home kitchen. There is a team of expert cake icers, their hands deftly twirling cakes on stands for a perfectly smooth cake surface with a signature swirl top. And each order is still packed by hand, a custom piece of equipment ensuring that even the cellophane is centered in the tin for each customer. The walk-in coolers may be bigger, with a bakery that now includes a shipping room with a conveyor belt for boxes that are loaded directly onto a truck, but the attention to delicious detail is still a Caroline's Cakes signature.

Most busy days will find Richard at some point along that conveyor belt, acting as a "chef expo" on the line, as he says, double-checking orders, making final adjustments, and generally keeping the thread of their cake community strong from Spartanburg to the wider world. Steps away, customers enter the café and often exclaim, "Doesn't it smell good in here!"

The scent of caramelizing sugar permeates all the corners of this building, which once, long ago, housed a printing company. There are marble café tables anchored by a bright yellow banquette, dark green accents, and, of course, the star of the show, a gleaming case of cake inviting each visitor to stay and sample something sweet.

"We really wanted to get back to that opportunity to connect with our customers face-to-face by inviting them into our bakery with this space," Richard says. "To say that seeing this come to life in this way has exceeded my expectations is an understatement. I'm really excited about the opportunities that this is going to offer us when it comes to connecting to our local community, from pop-up brunches to sip-and-shops, and it's a way to let folks who might not know us in on the Caroline's secret."

The secret is definitely out about this South Carolina bakery, and that's a sweet cause for celebration, one most definitely commemorated with a cake—or two—on the table.

eat cake.
be happy.

GO THERE:
Caroline's Cakes
925 Beaumont Avenue, Spartanburg, SC 29303
carolinescakes.com

BLACKBERRY LIME CAKE

Makes 1 (9-inch) cake

Caroline's Cakes' Blackberry Lime Cake is the ultimate celebration cake. Four layers of bright, citrusy lime cake are iced with a luscious blackberry buttercream and filled with layers of Blackberry Coulis and even more of that spectacular, berry-filled buttercream. Topped with a few fresh blackberries, this stunning spring cake is a favorite for a reason.

6	**cups (750 grams) all-purpose flour**
2	**tablespoons (30 grams) baking powder**
1	**teaspoon (5 grams) baking soda**
1	**teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt**
¼	**cup (12 grams) lightly packed lime zest**
1½	**cups (360 grams) whole milk**
½	**cup (120 grams) fresh lime juice**
2	**cups (454 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
4	**cups (800 grams) granulated sugar**
8	**large eggs (400 grams)**
4	**teaspoons (16 grams) vanilla extract**
4	**cups (1,325 grams) Blackberry Coulis (recipe follows)**

Blackberry Italian Buttercream (recipe follows)
Garnish: fresh blackberries

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Spray 4 (9-inch) round cake pans with cooking spray. (Alternatively, lightly butter 4 [9-inch] round cake pans.)
2. In a large bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. Stir in lime zest; set aside.
3. In a liquid-measuring cup, stir together milk and lime juice; set aside.
4. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and sugar at medium-high speed until fluffy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. With mixer on low speed, add eggs, one at a time, beating until combined after each addition. Beat in vanilla. Add flour mixture in three additions alternately with milk mixture, beginning and ending with flour mixture, beating just until combined after each addition and stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Divide batter among prepared pans.

5. Bake until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, 25 to 27 minutes. Let cool in pans for 10 minutes. Run a knife around pans to loosen edges of cake layers; remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks.
6. Using a serrated knife, level cooled cake layers. Place 1 cake layer on a cake plate; spread half of Blackberry Coulis on top. Top with second cake layer; spread 2 cups (520 grams) Blackberry Italian Buttercream on top. Top with third cake layer; spread remaining Blackberry Coulis on top. Top with remaining cake layer. Spread remaining Blackberry Italian Buttercream on top and sides of cake. Garnish with blackberries, if desired.

Blackberry Coulis

Makes about 6 cups

2 pounds (907 grams) fresh blackberries (about 6 cups)
2 cups (480 grams) water
4 cups (800 grams) granulated sugar
½ cup (64 grams) cornstarch

1. In a medium stockpot, cook blackberries over medium heat until hot and mushy and liquid begins to boil, about 20 minutes. Using a fine-mesh sieve, strain mixture into a medium bowl, pressing through as many solids as possible. When solids begin to appear dry, pour 2 cups (480 grams) water over them, and strain. Scrape bottom of sieve, and pour liquid into a stockpot. Add sugar and cornstarch, and stir to ensure there are no lumps. Cook over low heat, stirring frequently, until mixture has a honey-like consistency and is a deep color and an instant-read thermometer registers 200°F (93°C) to 210°F (99°C). Remove from heat, and let cool completely, stirring occasionally.

Blackberry Italian Buttercream

Makes about 8 cups

2¼ cups (450 grams) granulated sugar
½ cup (120 grams) water
1 cup (240 grams) egg whites (about 8 large egg whites)
3 cups (681 grams) unsalted butter, cubed and room temperature
1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
21 ounces (595 grams) Blackberry Coulis (recipe precedes)

1. In a medium saucepan, bring sugar and ½ cup (120 grams) water to a boil over medium-high heat, brushing down sides of pan with a pastry brush dipped in water to prevent crystals from forming. Cook for 7 minutes.
2. Meanwhile (see Note), in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat egg whites at high speed until stiff peaks form. With mixer on high speed, slowly add sugar syrup, pouring between whisk attachment and side of bowl. Beat until bowl is cool to touch, about 10 minutes. Add butter, a few cubes at a time, beating until combined after each addition. Add vanilla, and beat at low speed until light and fluffy. (At some points, the mixture might look curdled. Just keep beating; it will become smooth again.) Add Blackberry Coulis, and stir until combined.

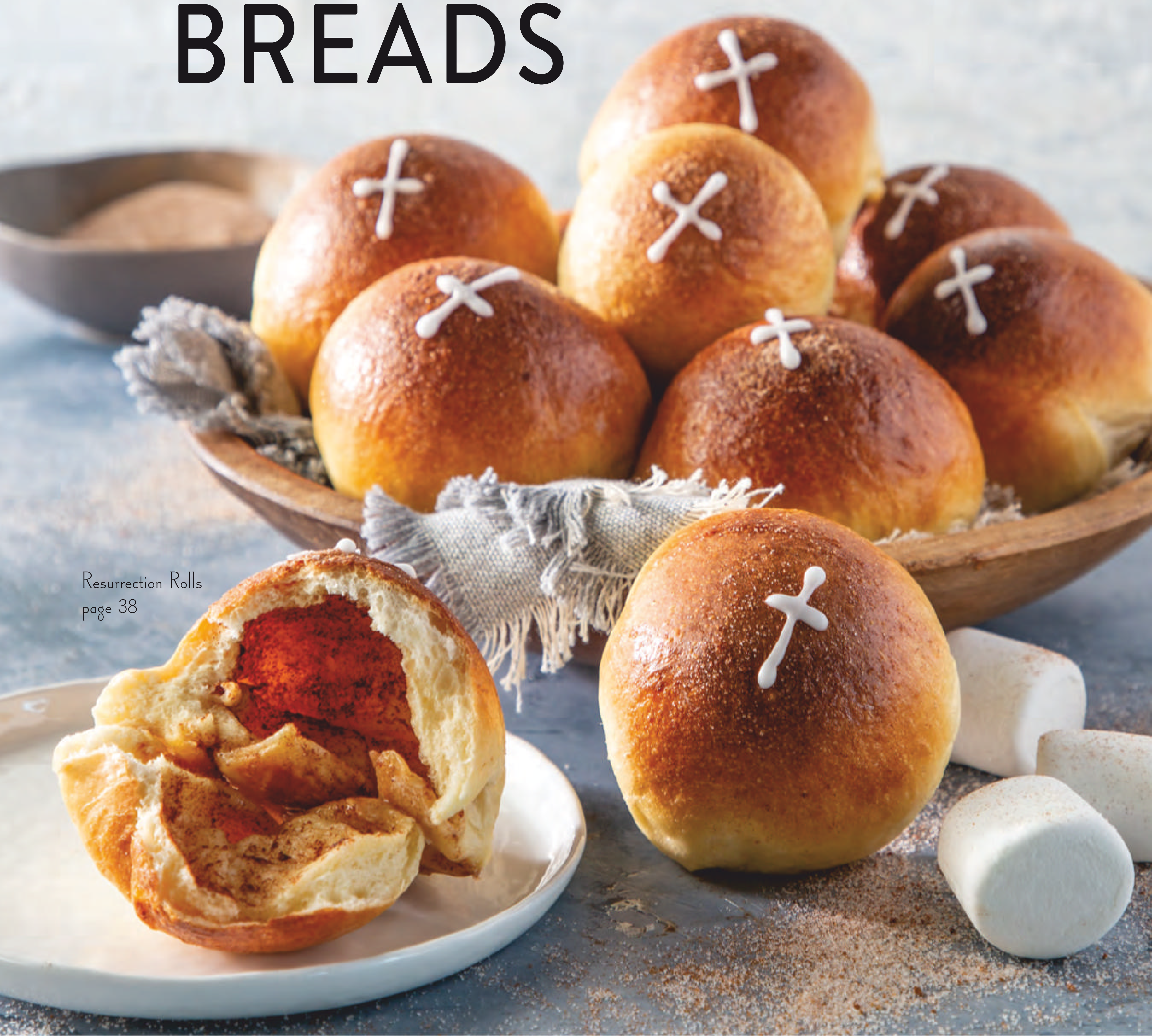
Note: *Begin beating your egg whites about 5 minutes after the sugar mixture comes to a boil. The egg whites will be ready when your sugar syrup timer goes off.*

Sweets
Savory

Eat Cake.
Be Happy.

EAGER FOR EASTER BREADS

FROM A BEAUTIFULLY BRAIDED GREEK LOAF DOTTED WITH FESTIVE, BRIGHTLY COLORED EGGS TO ROLLS WITH A SWEET SURPRISE, THESE ARE THE EASTER BREADS WE CAN'T WAIT TO MAKE THIS SEASON



Resurrection Rolls
page 38

Tsoureki
page 37

TSOUREKI

Makes 1 (14-inch) loaf

A traditional braided bread enjoyed by Greeks during Easter, tsoureki is made using an incredibly tender, enriched bread akin to challah, with brightly dyed Easter eggs nestled into the braided ring. The three strands of dough are said to represent the Holy Trinity, while the crimson eggs are said to symbolize the blood of Christ as well as eternity and fertility. It's customary to flavor the bread with orange, anise, and mahleb, a spice made from the seeds of a species of cherry with a taste akin to bitter almond and cherry. However, because the availability of mahleb varies by region, we've used almond extract in its place. It'll be the perfect addition to Easter brunch!

1 cup (240 grams) whole milk
¼ cup (57 grams) unsalted butter
4¾ to 5 cups (594 to 625 grams) all-purpose flour, divided
½ cup (100 grams) granulated sugar
4½ teaspoons (14 grams) instant yeast*
1 teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt
1 teaspoon (1 gram) orange zest
¾ teaspoon (1 gram) ground anise seed
3 large eggs (150 grams), room temperature and divided
1½ teaspoons (6 grams) almond extract
4 in-shell large eggs (224 grams)
Vegetable oil, for coating
1 tablespoon (15 grams) water
2 tablespoons (14 grams) sliced almonds
3 cups (720 grams) warm water (105°F/41°C to 110°F/43°C)
3 tablespoons (45 grams) distilled white vinegar
50 to 55 drops red liquid food coloring

1. In a small saucepan, heat milk and butter over medium-low heat until butter is melted and an instant-read thermometer registers 120°F (49°C) to 130°F (54°C).
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer, whisk together 3 cups (375 grams) flour, sugar, yeast, salt, orange zest, and anise seed. Add warm milk mixture, 2 room temperature eggs (100 grams), and almond extract; using the paddle attachment, beat at low speed until combined. With mixer on medium-low speed, gradually add 1¾ cups (219 grams) flour, beating until a soft dough forms.
3. Switch to the dough hook attachment. Beat at medium-low speed until dough is smooth and elastic, about 15 minutes; add up to remaining ¼ cup (31 grams) flour, 1 tablespoon (8 grams) at a time, if dough is too sticky. Turn out dough onto a lightly floured surface, and shape into a round.
4. Lightly spray a large bowl with cooking spray. Place dough in bowl, turning to grease top. Cover with plastic wrap. Refrigerate for at least 8 hours, preferably overnight. (Alternatively, cover and let rise in a warm, draft-free place [75°F/24°C] until doubled in size, about 1 hour. Punch down dough, and refrigerate for 30 minutes. It will be easier to braid while cold.)
5. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
6. Lightly coat in-shell eggs with vegetable oil. Set aside.
7. Punch dough down, and lightly knead 2 to 3 times. Divide into 3 portions (about 389 grams each). Roll each portion into a 26-inch rope. Pinch strands together on one end, and braid strands together, pinching to seal on other end. Shape into a wreath, tucking ends under wreath. Transfer to prepared pan. Gently tuck oiled in-shell eggs between strands of dough in wreath as desired. Cover with plastic wrap, and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°F/24°C) until puffed, 45 minutes to 1 hour.
8. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).
9. In a small bowl, lightly whisk together 1 tablespoon (15 grams) water and remaining 1 room temperature egg (50 grams). Lightly brush egg wash over braid, avoiding in-shell eggs. Sprinkle sliced almonds evenly over braid.
10. Bake until golden and an instant-read thermometer inserted in center registers 190°F (88°C), about 50 minutes, covering with foil during final 15 minutes of baking to prevent excess browning. Let cool on pan for 15 minutes. Remove from pan, and let cool completely on a wire rack.
11. Carefully remove in-shell eggs from loaf. Clean off any bread or vegetable oil residue with a clean towel.
12. In a medium bowl, whisk together 3 cups (720 grams) warm water, vinegar, and food coloring until combined. Carefully lower in-shell eggs into bowl; let stand until desired color is reached, 45 minutes to 1 hour, stirring occasionally. Remove in-shell eggs from water, and transfer to a paper towel to dry for at least 30 minutes. Carefully place in-shell eggs back in loaf. Serve immediately. Store bread (with eggs removed) in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 3 days.

**We used Platinum® Yeast from Red Star®.*

RESURRECTION ROLLS

Makes 12 rolls

A true Easter delight, these Resurrection Rolls are meant to represent the empty tomb of Christ after being resurrected. The magic of these rolls lies in the marshmallow. Surrounded by a soft, sweet dough, as these rolls bake, the cinnamon sugar-coated marshmallow placed inside melts away, leaving a pocket of air in its place. They're sweet, warmly spiced with cinnamon, and incredibly fun to bake for adults and kids alike.

2 to 2¼	**cups (254 to 286 grams) bread flour, divided**
2¼	**teaspoons (7 grams) instant yeast***
1½	**teaspoons (4.5 grams) kosher salt**
½	**cup (120 grams) whole milk**
¼	**cup (57 grams) unsalted butter**
⅓	**cup (67 grams) plus 1 tablespoon (12 grams) granulated sugar, divided**
1	**tablespoon (21 grams) honey**
2	**large eggs (100 grams), room temperature and divided**
1	**tablespoon (6 grams) ground cinnamon**
¼	**cup (57 grams) unsalted butter, melted**
12	**large marshmallows (72 grams)**
1	**tablespoon (15 grams) plus 2 teaspoons (10 grams) water, divided**
½	**cup (60 grams) confectioners' sugar**

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat 2 cups (254 grams) bread flour, yeast, and salt at low speed until combined.

2. In a small saucepan, heat milk, butter, 1 tablespoon (12 grams) sugar, and honey over medium-low heat until an instant-read thermometer registers 120°F (49°C) to 130°F (54°C). Add warm milk mixture and 1 egg (50 grams) to flour mixture, and beat at low speed until combined and a shaggy dough forms.

3. Switch to the dough hook attachment. Beat at medium speed until a smooth, elastic dough forms, about 12 minutes; add up to remaining ¼ cup (32 grams) flour, 1 tablespoon (8 grams) at a time, if dough is too sticky.

4. Spray a medium bowl with cooking spray. Place dough in bowl, turning to grease top. Cover and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°F/24°C) until doubled in size, 40 to 50 minutes.

5. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

6. Punch down dough. On a lightly floured surface, roll dough into a 12x9-inch rectangle. Cut dough into 12 (3-inch) squares.

7. In a small bowl, stir together cinnamon and remaining ⅓ cup (67 grams) sugar. Reserve 1 tablespoon (12 grams) cinnamon sugar. In another small bowl, place melted butter. Dip 1 marshmallow into melted butter; roll in cinnamon sugar. Place coated marshmallow in center of a dough square. Wrap dough around marshmallow, completely enclosing marshmallow and pinching any seams. On a clean surface, roll filled dough into a smooth round to completely seal. Place, seam side down, on prepared pan. Repeat with remaining dough, remaining marshmallows, remaining melted butter, and remaining cinnamon sugar, and place rolls at least 1½ inches apart on prepared pan. Cover and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°F/24°C) until doubled in size, 35 to 45 minutes.

8. Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C).

9. In a small bowl, whisk together 1 tablespoon (15 grams) water and remaining 1 egg (50 grams). Lightly brush tops of rolls with egg wash, and sprinkle with reserved 1 tablespoon (12 grams) cinnamon sugar as desired.

10. Bake until golden brown, about 10 minutes. Let cool on pan for about 5 minutes. Remove from pan (leave any leaked sugar on parchment), and let cool completely on a wire rack.

11. In another small bowl, whisk together confectioners' sugar and remaining 2 teaspoons (10 grams) water until smooth. Transfer to a pastry bag, and cut a ⅛- to 1/16-inch opening in tip. (Alternatively, transfer to a pastry bag fitted with a Wilton No. 2 piping tip.) Pipe small crosses on top of each bun as desired. Store in an airtight container for up to 4 days.

**We used Platinum® Yeast from Red Star®.*

Looking for more spectacular bread recipes? Head to *bakefromscratch.com* and check out our Bread Box collection!

the essential... BRIOCHE

THIS BEAUTIFULLY ENRICHED BREAD IS A FRENCH STAPLE THAT TAKES MANY FORMS. WHETHER MADE AS A LOAF, À TÊTE, OR AU SUCRE, THIS GOLDEN, DELICIOUSLY TENDER BAKE IS A LIGHTLY SWEET SENSATION.

Delightfully pillowy, with an incredibly rich yet featherlight crumb, the buttery brioche is truly a bread like no other. French in origin and a staple of *viennoiserie*, it's made in the same way as any other yeasted bread but enriched with eggs, butter, milk, and sugar to become something so much more. Yet it's these very same ingredients that make brioche a slightly more finicky dough, requiring an attention to the temperature of your ingredients, a rather extensive kneading of the dough, and sufficient time to rise. Beyond that, the dough is incredibly easy to work with and pliable, making it the perfect base for fanciful shapings. Step-by-step, every stage of the process is outlined here, from mixing to shaping. There's even a bonus recipe for Strawberry Bostock that'll turn your beautiful loaf of brioche into a jammy, almondy treat. But be warned, this bread could very well ruin all others for you.

Brioche: It's All About the Butter

Butter plays many roles in this dough, adding so much more than flavor

One of the main ingredients that makes this recipe an enriched bread, unsalted European-style butter adds unmatched flavor, texture, and depth to our brioche recipe. The butter sits at about 34% of the flour weight, making for an incredibly rich, tender dough. You'll notice that butter is the last ingredient added in this recipe, and that's for good reason. Fats like butter slow down the gluten-forming process, which is part of the reason why enriched breads typically call for a longer mixing time. The fat in the butter coats protein strands, acting like a barrier that prevents gluten proteins from sticking to one another, inhibiting the growth of long chains that ultimately create the bread's feathery texture. So, it's important that gluten structures are already formed before the butter is added; otherwise, you won't get that distinct, pull-apart texture.

Making the Dough

A beautiful base that can then be shaped into a plethora of forms, this egg- and butter-rich dough is all about ingredient temperatures, allowing for proper gluten development, and ample rise time. Enriched breads notoriously take longer to proof, so patience is key.

1. In a small bowl, stir together warm milk, yeast, and 1 teaspoon (4 grams) sugar. Let stand until foamy, about 5 minutes. This step, also known as "blooming" the yeast, is a simple way to ensure that your yeast is active and is going to work. If it isn't foamy after 5 minutes, you'll want to start over with new yeast. Also, keep in mind that yeast is killed at 140°F (60°C), so keep your thermometer on hand when heating the milk.

2. In the bowl of a stand mixer, whisk together 1⅓ cups (166 grams) flour, salt, and remaining 2 tablespoons plus 2 teaspoons (32 grams) sugar. Add yeast mixture and eggs. Using the paddle attachment, beat at low speed until combined, about 1 minute. With mixer on low speed, gradually add 1 cup (125 grams) flour, beating until a shaggy dough forms; scrape sides of bowl.

3. Switch to the dough hook attachment. Beat at medium-low speed until dough is smooth, elastic, and slightly tacky, 4 to 6 minutes; add up to remaining ⅓ cup (42 grams) flour, 1 tablespoon (8 grams) at a time, if dough is too sticky. With mixer on medium-low speed, add butter, 1 tablespoon (14 grams) at a time, beating until combined after each addition (6 to 7 minutes total). As the butter is incorporated, friction and heat from the mixer will warm it, so it's important that the butter not be too soft; otherwise, it may melt and separate from the dough. Conversely, if the butter is too cold, it won't incorporate smoothly into the dough and chunks of butter will remain even after mixing. For this reason, it's important that your butter is added into your dough at true room temperature. Don't panic if the butter doesn't incorporate immediately; go slow and only add more once it's fully incorporated. **Beat at medium speed until a smooth, elastic dough forms, 10 to 12 minutes.** When done mixing, the dough should be soft without being sticky. **Turn out onto a lightly floured surface; knead 5 to 8 times, and shape into a smooth round.**

4. Lightly oil a large bowl. Place dough in bowl, turning to grease top. Cover and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°F/24°C) until doubled in size, 45 minutes to 1 hour.

5. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

6. Turn out dough onto a lightly floured surface, and lightly punch down dough. Flatten dough into an 8x6-inch rectangle, and transfer to prepared pan. Cover with plastic wrap, and refrigerate for at least 8 hours or up to overnight. A proof in the refrigerator allows for more fermentation time, which ultimately results in a more flavorful brioche. Enriched doughs are notorious for taking a longer time to rise, so patience is key. Your waiting will be rewarded.

Essential Brioche Dough

Makes 1 Brioche Loaf, 1 Brioche à Tête, or 6 Brioche au Sucre

This buttery beauty acts as the base for brioche of many shapes and sizes. Whether coated in pearl sugar or shaped into a simple loaf with a shimmery egg wash, this dough yields an ultra-soft, slightly sweet bread that shines. Its golden hue and fluffy interior are simply irresistible, and it'll be nearly impossible not to dive in the second your bread emerges from the oven.

⅓ cup (80 grams) warm whole milk (110°F/43°C to 115°F/46°C)
2¼ teaspoons (7 grams) instant yeast
3 tablespoons (36 grams) granulated sugar, divided
2⅓ to 2⅔ cups (291 to 333 grams) all-purpose flour, divided
2 teaspoons (6 grams) kosher salt
2 large eggs (100 grams), lightly beaten and room temperature
½ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, cubed and room temperature

1. In a small bowl, stir together warm milk, yeast, and 1 teaspoon (4 grams) sugar. Let stand until foamy, about 5 minutes.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer, whisk together 1⅓ cups (166 grams) flour, salt, and remaining 2 tablespoons plus 2 teaspoons (32 grams) sugar. Add yeast mixture and eggs. Using the paddle attachment, beat at low speed until combined, about 1 minute. With mixer on low speed, gradually add 1 cup (125 grams) flour, beating until a shaggy dough forms; scrape sides of bowl.
3. Switch to the dough hook attachment. Beat at medium-low speed until dough is smooth, elastic, and slightly tacky, 4 to 6 minutes; add up to remaining ⅓ cup (42 grams) flour, 1 tablespoon (8 grams) at a time, if dough is too sticky. With mixer on medium-low speed, add butter, 1 tablespoon (14 grams) at a time, beating until combined after each addition (6 to 7 minutes total). Beat at medium speed until a smooth, elastic dough forms, 10 to 12 minutes. Turn out onto a lightly floured surface; knead 5 to 8 times, and shape into a smooth round.
4. Lightly oil a large bowl. Place dough in bowl, turning to grease top. Cover and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°F/24°C) until doubled in size, 45 minutes to 1 hour.
5. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
6. Turn out dough onto a lightly floured surface, and lightly punch down dough. Flatten dough into an 8x6-inch rectangle, and transfer to prepared pan. Cover with plastic wrap, and refrigerate for at least 8 hours or up to overnight.

TEMP CHECK!
Unlike softened butter, room temperature butter is soft enough to easily incorporate into your dough and should provide no resistance when pressed with a finger. If you'd like to use an instant-read thermometer, room temperature typically sits around 70°F (21°C).

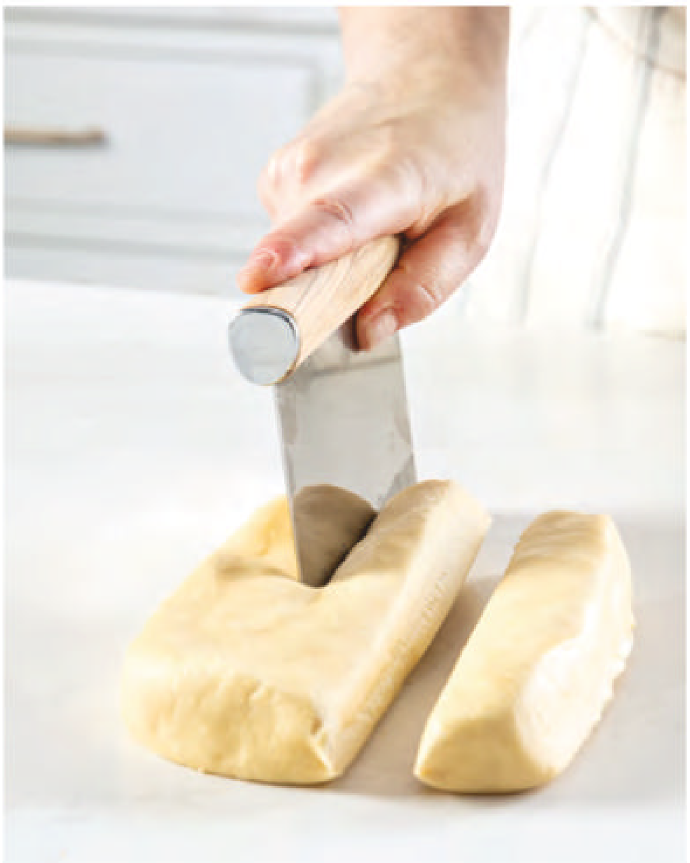
Shaping Success

Tips and tricks for when your brioche doesn't want to behave

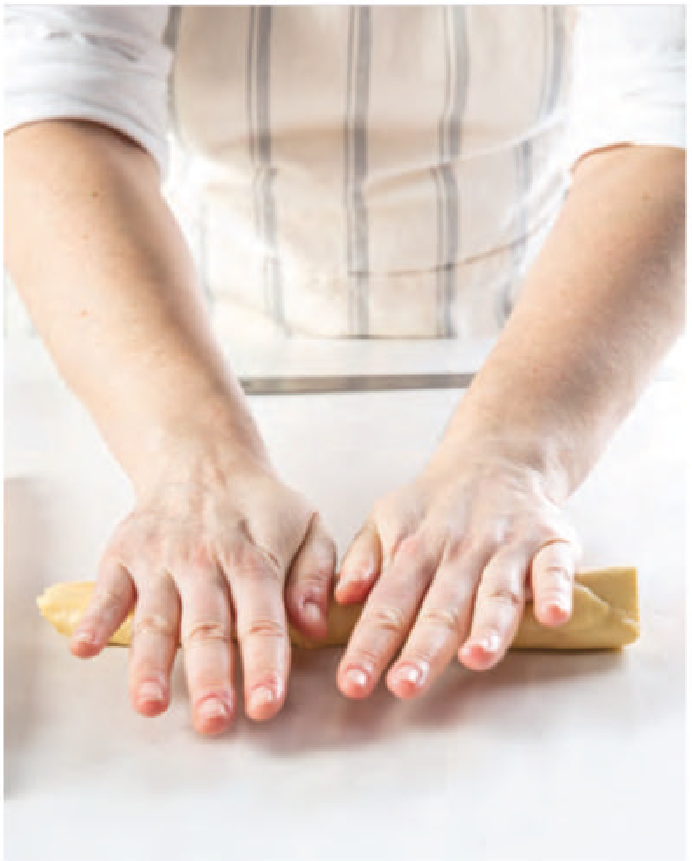
KEEP YOUR COOL: Keeping this dough cold will make shaping far less stress-inducing (another bonus of having the dough complete its second rise in the refrigerator). All that butter becomes quite messy if your dough gets too warm from handling, so try to work quickly and efficiently.

REST & RETRY: If the dough is not rolling out easily and, instead, snapping back into place every time you try to shape it, cover the dough, let it rest for 10 to 15 minutes, and then try again. This allows the gluten to rest and let go of some tension, making it infinitely easier to work with.

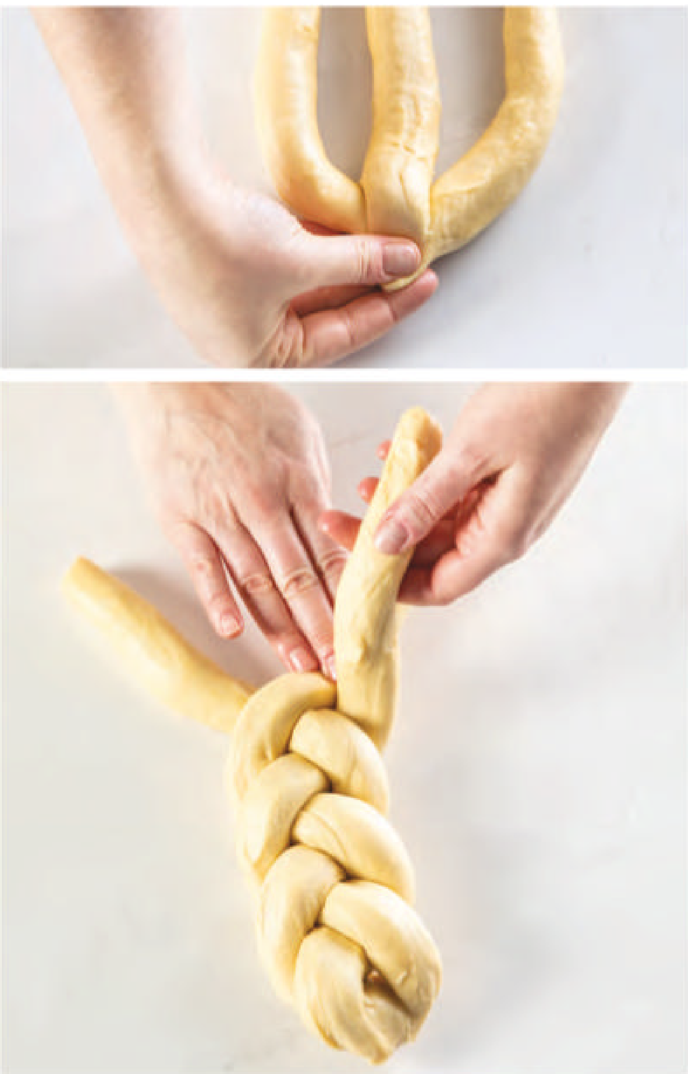
Shape and Bake: The Brioche Loaf



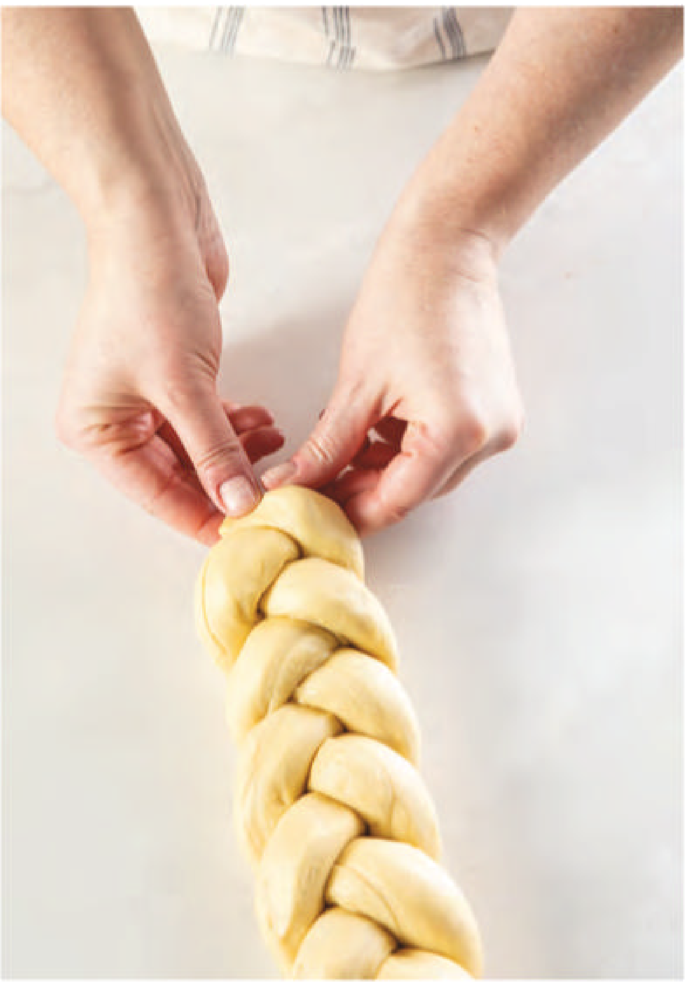
1. Turn out Essential Brioche Dough onto a lightly floured surface, and divide into 3 portions (about 217 grams each).



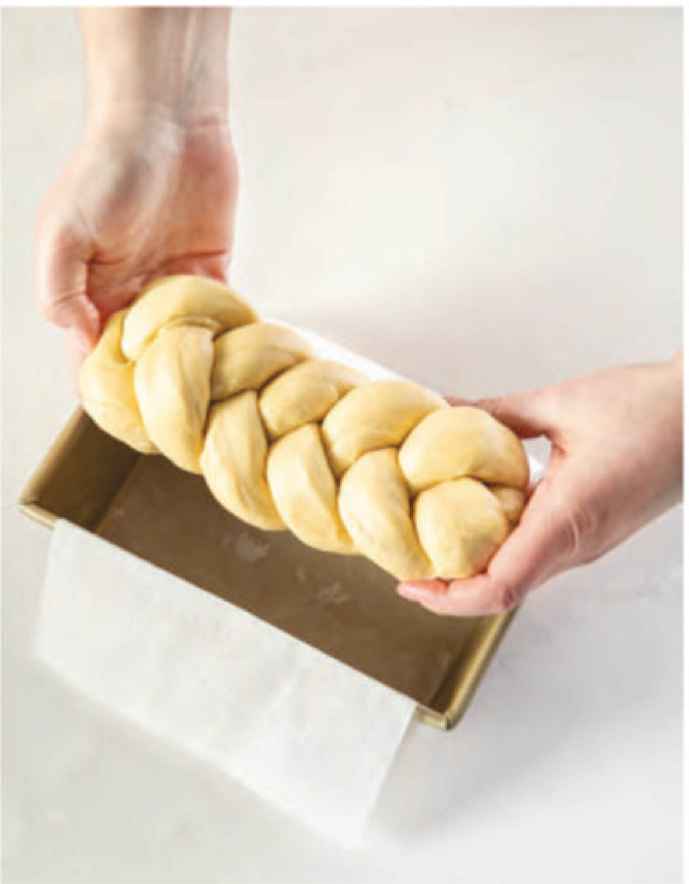
2. Roll each portion into a rope about 14 inches long. To roll out each piece, apply even pressure with both hands flat, rolling dough toward and away from you, moving hands outward as you press.



3. Pinch ropes together at one end, and carefully braid together tightly.



4. Pinch ends to seal. Make sure both ends are well sealed; otherwise, the dough may expand and come undone as it rises and bakes.



5. Place braid in prepared pan, compressing to fit as needed. (Try not to fold the dough too much under itself; this will result in an irregular bumpy top.) Cover and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°F/24°C) until puffed and dough passes the finger dent test, 50 to 55 minutes.

Brioche Loaf

Makes 1 (8½x4½-inch) loaf

This sweet and simple loaf gets its gorgeous bubbly top from a simple braid. With braided breads, it's important that the ends are sealed and not tucked or folded under the loaf; otherwise, it may rise and bake slightly misshapen.

Essential Brioche Dough (recipe on page 42)
1 large egg (50 grams)
1 tablespoon (15 grams) water

1. Lightly spray an 8½x4½-inch loaf pan with baking spray with flour. Line pan with parchment paper, letting excess extend over sides of pan.
2. Turn out Essential Brioche Dough onto a lightly floured surface, and divide into 3 portions (about 217 grams each). Roll each portion into a rope about 14 inches long. Pinch ropes together at one end, and carefully braid together tightly. Pinch ends to seal. Place braid in prepared pan, compressing to fit as needed. (Try not to fold the dough too much under itself; this will result in an irregular bumpy top.) Cover and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°F/24°C) until puffed and dough passes the finger dent test, 50 to 55 minutes. (See Note.)
3. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).
4. In a small bowl, whisk together egg and 1 tablespoon (15 grams) water. Lightly brush egg wash over surface of dough.
5. Bake until golden brown and an instant-read thermometer inserted in center registers 190°F (88°C), 40 to 45 minutes, covering with foil during final 15 minutes of baking to prevent excess browning. Let cool in pan for 10 minutes. Remove from pan, and let cool completely on a wire rack.

Note: *To use the finger dent test, lightly flour the surface of the dough, and gently press your finger about ½ inch into the surface. If your dough has properly fermented, you should be able to watch the dough spring back slightly but still show an indentation. If the dent disappears, the dough is underproofed and needs more time.*

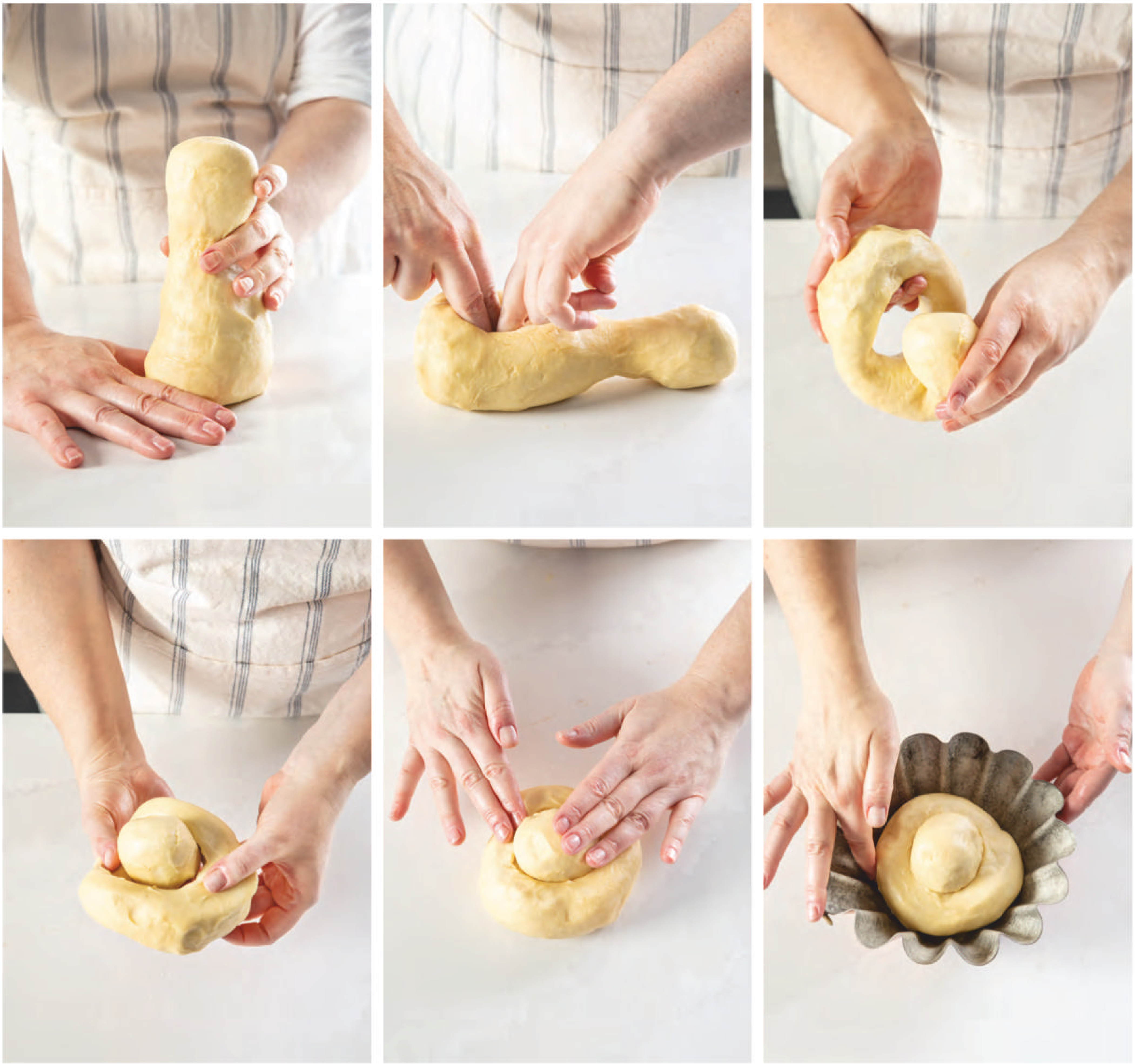
Brioche à Tête

Makes 1 (8-inch) loaf

The French à tête *refers to the shape* (tête *means "head") of this tiered beauty, easily recognized by its round top and fluted bottom. This shaping technique is traditional but not nearly as complicated as it might appear.*

Essential Brioche Dough (recipe on page 42)
1 large egg (50 grams)
1 tablespoon (15 grams) water

1. Spray an 8-inch brioche à tête pan with baking spray with flour.
2. Shape Essential Brioche Dough into a round by folding edges in on themselves, and pinch seam to seal. Turn dough so seam is on bottom; using cupped hands, pull dough toward you. Rotate dough 90 degrees, and repeat until round is smooth, tight, and sealed.
3. With seam on bottom, roll dough into a 6-inch log. Make an indentation 2 inches in; roll and squeeze dough at indentation to exaggerate it and nearly separate section from remainder of log. Pat remainder of log (while still attached) into a 5-inch round, with any seams or folds still on bottom. Using your fingers, pierce a hole in center of large section of dough and stretch it to 2 to 3 inches wide. Carefully tuck smaller section of dough through hole and to other side, creating classic à tête shape. Place in prepared pan as straight as possible. Cover and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°F/24°C) until dough is puffed, 1 hour to 1 hour and 15 minutes.
4. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).
5. In a small bowl, whisk together egg and 1 tablespoon (15 grams) water. Lightly brush loaf with egg wash.
6. Bake until golden brown and an instant-read thermometer inserted in center registers 190°F (88°C), about 45 minutes, covering with foil during final 15 minutes of baking to prevent excess browning. Let cool in pan for 10 minutes. Remove from pan, and let cool completely. Store in an airtight container for up to 4 days.



Shape and Bake: Brioche à Tête

1. Roll dough into a 6-inch log. Make an indentation 2 inches in; roll and squeeze dough at indentation to exaggerate it and nearly separate section from remainder of log. Pat remainder of log (while still attached) into a 5-inch round, with any seams or folds still on bottom. Using your fingers, pierce a hole in center of large section of dough and stretch it to 2 to 3 inches wide. Carefully tuck smaller section of dough through hole and to other side, creating classic à tête shape. Place in prepared pan as straight as possible. Cover and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°F/24°C) until dough is puffed, 1 hour to 1 hour and 15 minutes. Some techniques have you separate the top round of dough from the bottom base. However, our shaping strategy ensures that the dough bakes as one, without the two pieces splitting apart as they rise or bake. Using this technique, there's a far smaller chance of the brioche losing its signature shape.

Brioche au Sucre

Makes 6 buns

Formed into rounds and then coated with egg wash and Swedish pearl sugar, these buns are as beautiful as they are delicious. Their shaping is straightforward, but pay attention to the seams and make sure each round is properly sealed.

Essential Brioche Dough (recipe on page 42)
1 large egg (50 grams)
1 tablespoon (15 grams) water
¼ cup (50 grams) Swedish pearl sugar

1. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

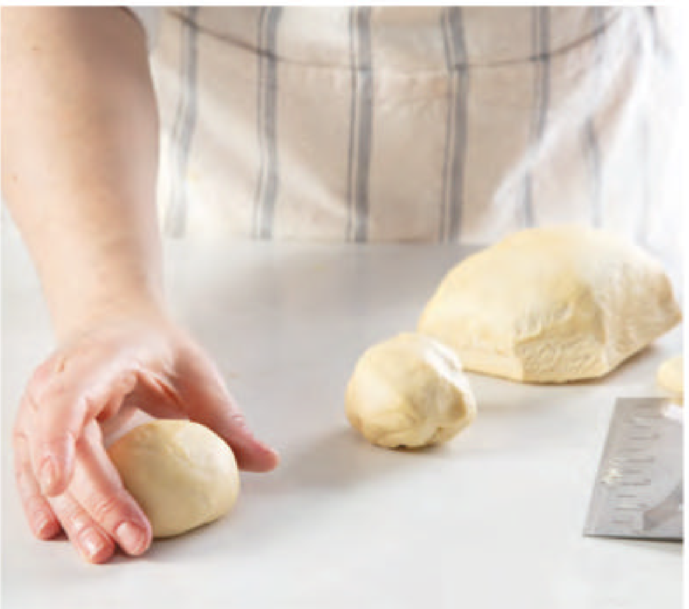
2. Divide Essential Brioche Dough into 6 portions (about 103 grams each). Shape each into a tight round, folding dough in on itself to create a smooth top and gathering edges into one seam. Place, seam side down, on a clean surface, and using a cupped hand, pull dough toward you. Rotate dough 90 degrees, and repeat until you have a smooth, tight, and sealed round. Place at least 1½ inches apart on prepared pan. Cover and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°F/24°C) until puffed, 45 minutes to 1 hour.

3. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).

4. In a small bowl, whisk together egg and 1 tablespoon (15 grams) water. Lightly brush egg wash onto buns. Sprinkle pearl sugar on top.

5. Bake until golden brown and an instant-read thermometer inserted in center registers 190°F (88°C), 25 to 30 minutes. Let cool on pan for 15 minutes. Remove from pan, and let cool completely on a wire rack.

Shape and Bake: Brioche au Sucre



1. Divide Essential Brioche Dough into 6 portions (about 103 grams each). Shape each into a tight round, folding dough in on itself to create a smooth top and gathering edges into one seam. Place, seam side down, on a clean surface, and using a cupped hand, pull dough toward you. Rotate dough 90 degrees, and repeat until you have a smooth, tight, and sealed round. This pulling motion is what seals the seams of the bun, so make sure you're applying gentle pressure as you pull, taking advantage of the resistance the counter provides. **Place at least 1½ inches apart on prepared pan. Cover and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°F/24°C) until puffed, 45 minutes to 1 hour.**

2. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).

3. In a small bowl, whisk together egg and 1 tablespoon (15 grams) water. Lightly brush egg wash onto buns. Sprinkle pearl sugar on top.

Strawberry Bostock

Makes 10 pastries

Sitting somewhere between French toast and an almond croissant, bostock is a French invention that ingeniously turns leftover slices of brioche bread into rich, radiant pastries. Each slice is brushed with a honey lemon syrup, slathered with an aromatic almond frangipane, and then topped with ruby-red fresh strawberries. We can't think of a better or simpler springtime treat!

1 pound (454 grams) fresh strawberries, hulled and sliced
⅓ cup (67 grams) plus 2 tablespoons (24 grams) granulated sugar, divided
½ cup (170 grams) honey
¼ cup (60 grams) warm water (105°F/40°C to 110°F/43°C)
¼ cup (60 grams) fresh lemon juice
1 cup (96 grams) almond flour
1 teaspoon (3 grams) cornstarch
¼ teaspoon kosher salt
⅓ cup (76 grams) unsalted butter, softened
1 large egg (50 grams), room temperature
Brioche Loaf* (recipe on page 44)
¼ cup (28 grams) sliced almonds
Garnish: confectioners' sugar

1. Position oven rack in top third of oven. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.
2. In a medium bowl, toss together strawberries and 2 tablespoons (24 grams) granulated sugar.
3. In a small bowl, whisk together honey, ¼ cup (60 grams) warm water, and lemon juice until combined and honey dissolves.
4. In another small bowl, whisk together flour, cornstarch, salt, and remaining ⅓ cup (67 grams) granulated sugar until combined.
5. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and flour mixture at medium-low speed until smooth and combined, about 2 minutes. Add egg, and beat until combined.
6. Cut Brioche Loaf into 10 (¾-inch-thick) slices, and place on prepared pans. Using a pastry brush, liberally brush each slice with honey lemon syrup, nearly saturating bread with syrup. Spoon 2 tablespoons (25 grams) frangipane on each slice, and using a knife or offset spatula, spread to edges. Top with strawberries (about ¼ cup or 46 grams each), and sprinkle with sliced almonds.
7. Bake until strawberries are soft and frangipane is golden and set on edges, 15 to 20 minutes. Let cool on pan for 10 minutes. Garnish with a confectioners' sugar, if desired. Serve warm or at room temperature.

**Bostock is best made with day-old brioche bread, but you can also use bread made the same day.*

Welcome TO OUR NEW HOME

BY OLIVIA KAVANAGH / PHOTOGRAPHY BY KYLE CARPENTER / STYLING BY MAGGIE HILL

WILLIAMS SONOMA
BOOS BLOCKS

> "We're very lucky to have such a beautiful space to work in every day. It's easy to be inspired and creative when you're baking in kitchens like this."
>
> **LAURA CRANDALL**
> *test kitchen director*

Food stylist Aaron Conrad preparing for a photo shoot.

WE TAKE YOU INSIDE THE NEW *BAKE FROM SCRATCH* TEST KITCHEN—A TRUE BAKER'S PARADISE—IN THE HEART OF DOWNTOWN BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA, WITH A BEHIND-THE-SCENES LOOK AT HOW OUR RECIPES REACH YOU, FROM CONCEPT TO PRINT, AND ALL THE ACTION AND EVENTS COMING UP THAT ARE SURE TO MAKE THIS A ONE-OF-A-KIND COLLABORATIVE SPACE

It's bright, it's light, and there's an energy. A steady thrum of conversation and the ever-present soundtrack of ovens opening and closing, knives chopping, dough mixing, and jams bubbling–the new *Bake from Scratch* test kitchen is a dream turned reality. And located on one of the main thoroughfares of downtown Birmingham, Alabama—2nd Avenue North—that vibrant energy and innovation fits right in. The 21,000-square-foot building, previously home to a law firm, was stripped to the studs for a total internal renovation before Hoffman Media moved in. A true labor of love, editor-in-chief Brian Hart Hoffman and the team spent more than a year working with designers, architects, and construction crews at Robins & Morton and Williams Blackstock Architects, ensuring that no detail was overlooked. Today, that vision and meticulousness has transformed that dark and drab law office into Hoffman Media's bright and inviting new headquarters. Lovingly dubbed the "Hoffice on 2nd," the two-story space promises plenty of room for a new wave of growth for *Bake from Scratch* and for Hoffman Media as a whole.

Naturally, the test kitchen sits at the center of the action at the Hoffice on 2nd. With 12 state-of-the-art kitchen workstations plus two additional kitchens—one suited for photo shoots and demonstrations and another outfitted with technology for video production—the space truly is a baker's wonderland. Every studio and workstation is outfitted with Silestone countertops by Cosentino, a hybrid quartz surface that's as durable as it is beautiful, giving each kitchen a sharp, clean look. Then there are the ovens. On top of the individual LG ovens found at each

workstation, the space also features an entire wall of 14 additional LG ovens, allowing each recipe developer the ability to test multiple recipes simultaneously. The demonstration and video production kitchens also feature stunning Signature Kitchen Suite ovens. Eight commercial refrigerators, four commercial freezers, and a pair of commercial dishwashers ensure that even the most basic aspects of day-to-day operations run smoothly.

The open-concept design and kitchen layout provide the perfect space for hosting events like baking retreats and hands-on classes. Bakers who attended the 2022 Holiday Baking Retreat with *Bake from Scratch* marveled at the space's seamless connection between the comfort of a home kitchen and the convenience of a professional one. Every day was interspersed with live baking demonstrations by Brian and then bakers would be sent to their stations to recreate that same baking magic. At their stations, every baker had access to their own oven and rollable 21-gallon bins of both all-purpose flour and granulated sugar, but no tool, dish, or appliance was anything outside of what they might have in their kitchens at home. Recognizing that baking is just as much about the experience as the outcome, it was important to Brian that every bake made during a retreat at the Hoffice on 2nd be replicable even once bakers had returned home. It comes as no surprise that by the end of the retreat, every attendee had not only made amazing connections but had also baked camera-ready cakes, rolls, and muffins.

When the space isn't being used for retreats and events, photography sets are also set up adjacent to the kitchen workstations, meaning bakes travel only a few feet from oven to set, giving photographers and stylists a chance to capture each cookie, cake, and bread at its freshest and finest. From the breathtaking natural light in the space to the expansive prop closet that contains every dish, utensil, and stylized prop you could imagine, each recipe receives special attention to ensure that it's looking its absolute best come shoot day.

Bake from Scratch Official Test Kitchen Partners

These are the brands that supply our test kitchen, ensuring unmatched quality and flavor in every bake

Red Star® has been one of the most trusted brands in the baking world for more than a century, producing high-quality yeast that professional bakers turn to time and again. With Red Star, we get fluffy, sky-high breads every time.
redstaryeast.com

Taking pride in its Georgia pecans for more than 75 years, **Schermer Pecans** is one of only a few family-run pecan companies that grows, shells, and distributes its own pecans. From tree to table, Schermer oversees every step of the process. This ensures consistent quality and freshness throughout the entire pecan-growing and -selling life cycle.
schermerpecans.com

Started back in 1906 as the California and Hawaiian Sugar Refining Company, **C&H® Sugar** has been dedicated to providing high-quality cane sugar since the beginning. A recipe that starts with C&H® Sugar—a favorite of professionals and novice bakers alike—is sure to be sweet.
chsugar.com

A family-owned business brought to the US from Italy in the 1970s, **BelGioioso** is the best source for an array of classic Italian cheeses. Today, BelGioioso manufactures, ages, packages, and ships more than 25 varieties of specialty cheeses. The newest addition to our lineup of official test kitchen partners, BelGioioso promises excellence in every cheesy bite.
belgioioso.com

> “I love that our culinary photo shoots take place in our test kitchen. Food only travels a few feet from oven or stovetop to photo set.”
>
> SIDNEY BRAGIEL
> *senior stylist*

(This page, clockwise from top left) Bakers prepare muffins at our Birmingham Holiday Baking Retreat; Brian gives a live demonstration at our first retreat in the new Birmingham test kitchen; stylist Maggie Hill (left) and test kitchen director Laura Crandall (right) prepare for a photo shoot. (Opposite) A peek inside the second floor test kitchen.

TEST KITCHEN TALLY

Just how much does the test kitchen use each month?

80 pounds of butter

200 to **250** pounds of granulated sugar

60 dozen eggs

(Above) The prop room used for food magazines is filled with dishes and cookware of all shapes and colors. (Opposite, clockwise from top left) The demonstration kitchen all set up for a retreat; cast iron cookware ready for recipe testing; our collection of Goldtouch pans from Williams Sonoma and Nordic Ware Bundt pans; the wall of 14 LG electric ovens.

In fact, stylists plan photo shoots days and sometimes weeks in advance. Meetings with the stylists, photographer, editorial team, and art director take place before each shoot to discuss the look of each feature, from surface and background colors that will best complement the bakes featured to photo angles, bakeware, props, and garnishes. Rest assured, every swoop of buttercream and sprinkle of flour on the pages of *Bake from Scratch* is a purposeful addition. And with two prop storage rooms that house thousands of items from floor to ceiling, there are limitless possibilities. One of the rooms is dedicated entirely to props for our food-focused publications, with every item organized by color so that stylists can quickly pull props, even on the fly, to nail the look for each shoot.

But before a recipe is shot, there are months of planning and preparation that must occur first. Concept development for each issue begins as early as a year in advance, starting with a team-wide multiday meeting once a year to brainstorm and map out all the features and themes for the year. Ideas can range from something as broad as "spring cakes" to direct requests for specific recipes or ingredients to be featured. From there, as the print date for each issue approaches, a more specific development stage begins. The editors begin to research and pull together a more detailed lineup of recipes for our editor-in-chief, Brian, to review. Once recipes are selected and concepts are approved, the test kitchen steps in to make each recipe reality. With recipes that require seasonal ingredients, like fresh figs in fall (our "Big on Fig" feature in September/October 2022 being one of many examples), prior planning is essential. As test kitchen director Laura Crandall explains, "Some recipes are shot in season a year in advance, and other times, we are working four to six months ahead of the magazine's publication date." Likewise, recipes for our *Holiday Cookies* special issue are being tested and developed in the heat of Birmingham summers, and summery spreads are a bright highlight in the winter. During this stage of development, a recipe will be tested and undergo tastings with the test kitchen and editorial team until it reaches perfection. Sometimes a recipe shines on the first try,

Tools of the TK

Every recipe developed at Hoffman Media is designed with home cooks in mind. So, it's only fitting that every tool be used with that same audience in mind. These are just a few of the tools our test kitchen couldn't operate without.

Our kitchen cabinets and drawers are filled with **Zwilling tools and cookware**, so whether we're slicing and trimming a cake or deep-frying doughnuts in a Dutch oven, we've got every knife, dish, and utensil we need. *zwilling.com*

Our beautiful **Silestone countertops by Cosentino** are scratch- and stain-resistant, and easy to clean, making them the perfect option for our busy test kitchen. / *cosentino.com*

Perfect for testing all of our bakes for doneness, from cakes to breads, **ThermoWorks Thermapens** come to our rescue daily. / *thermoworks.com*

We love the look and functionality of the lovely **utensil crocks and Goldtouch® bakeware from Williams Sonoma** that fill the workstations. *williams-sonoma.com*

Trust us—no multi-cook kitchen thrives without well-executed organization. Thanks to plenty of **tools and storage containers from OXO**, we're able to utilize space and keep each workstation in order. / *oxo.com*

The workhorse of our recipes, our well-loved **KitchenAid stand mixers** located in each kitchen space help do everything from whipping light-as-air meringue to kneading thick dough. *kitchenaid.com*

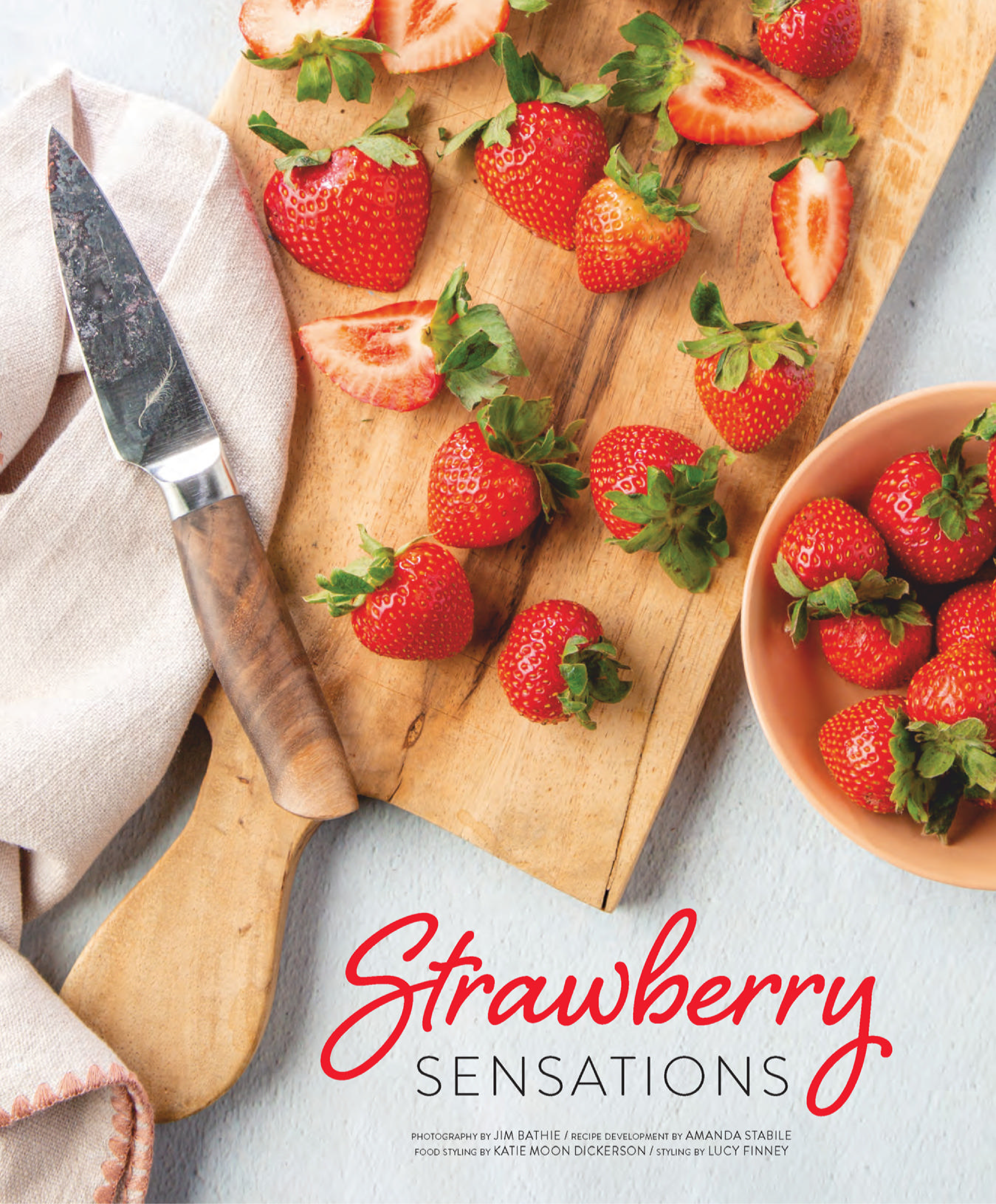
Handsome **Boos Blocks wooden worktables** give our test kitchen professionals extra workspace to knead dough and prepare for photo shoots. / *johnboos.com*

> "I'm so excited to have a dedicated video kitchen for my weekly Baking School classes, and can't wait to share all the video programming we have in store!"
>
> **BRIAN HART HOFFMAN**
> *editor-in-chief*

(Above) Editor-in-chief Brian Hart Hoffman uses the video production kitchen for a virtual Baking School with Williams Sonoma class. (Opposite, clockwise from top) VP of culinary & custom content Brooke Bell (left), recipe developer Amanda Stabile (center), and Brian (right) get together for a tasting; each kitchen utilizes efficient organization tools like this Williams Sonoma utensil crock; we have equipped our kitchens with all our favorite tools; a loaf of bread is tested for doneness with a ThermoWorks Thermapen.

and other times, a bake will undergo numerous iterations, each time being tweaked and fine-tuned until the recipe and editorial vision align. Once recipes receive approval from both the editorial and test kitchen teams, food stylists are responsible for baking picture-perfect versions of the finalized recipes for photo shoots, working together with photo stylists and photographers to create the images that bring the recipes and features of *Bake from Scratch* to life. After a recipe has been shot, only then is the recipe forwarded along to the editorial team for all written copy, like recipe headnotes and stories, to be added in. From there, the editorial team and copy editor both have an opportunity to input edits before copy and images come together with the art director. Responsible for laying out the magazine, creating a fluid and cohesive structure throughout, the art director gets to look at everything on a greater scale, focusing on the bigger picture. After everything's been laid out, everyone involved receives a digital or print binder. Binders are the final review copy of the magazine, where all the features and photography come together as one cohesive issue for the editing team to look through. This is the last look, when all edits are finalized before being shipped off to the printer. Then, a few weeks later, the issue is printed and ready for distribution.

As *Bake from Scratch* celebrates its eighth year of publication, that process continues to evolve, but the brand-new space in downtown Birmingham promises many more years of beautiful baking and innovation to come.



Strawberry
SENSATIONS

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JIM BATHIE / RECIPE DEVELOPMENT BY AMANDA STABILE
FOOD STYLING BY KATIE MOON DICKERSON / STYLING BY LUCY FINNEY

THESE RUBY-RED JEWELS ARE ONE OF THE FIRST SIGNS OF SPRING AND ALWAYS REASON FOR CELEBRATION. THIS COLLECTION OF RECIPES, FROM A ROASTED STRAWBERRY QUICK BREAD TO SWEET AND SALTY THUMBPRINT COOKIES, PUTS THE PRIZED FRUIT FRONT AND CENTER.

Strawberry Pretzel
Thumbprint Cookies
page 62

cover recipe

Strawberry Layer Cake
page 64

ROASTED STRAWBERRY BREAD

Makes 1 (8x4-inch) loaf

Pretty in pink, this bright and beautiful quick bread uses Roasted Strawberries to achieve a concentrated, almost caramelized sweet strawberry flavor. Greek yogurt in the batter yields a rich, tender crumb while fresh strawberries and lemon juice keep the flavors light and springy. Topped with a simple stir-together strawberry glaze, this Roasted Strawberry Bread shines.

Roasted Strawberries (recipe follows)
1½ cups (188 grams) all-purpose flour
1½ teaspoons (7.5 grams) baking powder
¾ teaspoon (2.25 grams) kosher salt
¾ cup (150 grams) granulated sugar
2 large eggs (100 grams), room temperature
¼ cup (56 grams) vegetable oil
¼ cup (60 grams) full-fat plain Greek yogurt, room temperature
1¾ teaspoons (7 grams) vanilla extract*, divided
½ teaspoon (2.5 grams) fresh lemon juice
1 cup (155 grams) diced fresh strawberries
1 tablespoon (15 grams) whole milk
1½ to 2 cups (180 to 240 grams) confectioners' sugar

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Spray an 8x4-inch loaf pan with baking spray with flour. Line pan with parchment paper, letting excess extend over sides of pan.
2. In the work bowl of a food processor, pulse Roasted Strawberries until smooth. Reserve ¼ cup (65 grams) in a small bowl.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, and salt.
4. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat sugar and eggs at medium speed until pale and thick, about 4 minutes. With mixer on medium speed, slowly add oil, beating until combined. Beat in yogurt, ¾ teaspoon (3 grams) vanilla, and lemon juice. Add remaining strawberry purée, and beat until combined, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture, beating until almost completely combined. Gently fold in diced strawberries. Pour batter into prepared pan.
5. Bake until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean and an instant-

read thermometer inserted in center registers 205°F (96°C), 1 hour to 1 hour and 5 minutes. Let cool in pan for 10 minutes. Remove from pan, and let cool completely on a wire rack.
6. Add milk and remaining 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla to reserved ¼ cup (65 grams) strawberry purée, whisking until combined. Add 1½ cups (180 grams) confectioners' sugar, and whisk until combined; add up to remaining ½ cup (60 grams) confectioners' sugar until desired consistency is reached. Immediately pour over cooled bread. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

**We used Rodelle Pure Vanilla Extract.*

ROASTED STRAWBERRIES

Makes about 1¼ cups

1 pound (454 grams) fresh strawberries, hulled and halved
2 tablespoons (24 grams) granulated sugar

1. Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C). Line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. In a medium bowl, toss together strawberries and sugar until combined. Spread in a single layer on prepared pan.
3. Bake until very soft, dark in color, and fragrant, 25 to 30 minutes. Let cool completely on pan. Best used same day but can be refrigerated in an airtight container overnight.

STRAWBERRY PRETZEL THUMBPRINT COOKIES

Makes 20 cookies

We challenge you to find a bake that more perfectly captures the essence and excitement of spring. There's something almost nostalgic about the combination of crisp and salty pretzels, sweet and jammy strawberries, and lightly tangy cream cheese—and we can't get enough. A little bit chewy and a little bit crisp, it'll be nearly impossible to eat just one.

¾ cup (170 grams) unsalted butter, softened
½ cup (100 grams) granulated sugar
1 large egg (50 grams), room temperature
2 teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract
2 cups (250 grams) all-purpose flour
¾ teaspoon (2.25 grams) kosher salt
4 cups (128 grams) lightly crushed pretzels
⅔ cup (180 grams) Strawberry Quick Jam (recipe on page 64)
Cream Cheese Glaze (recipe follows)

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and sugar at medium speed until pale and creamy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add egg and vanilla, beating until combined.
3. In a small bowl, whisk together flour and salt. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating until just combined and stopping to scrape sides of bowl.
4. In a shallow bowl, place pretzels.
5. Using a 1½-tablespoon spring-loaded scoop, scoop dough, and roll into balls. Roll in pretzels, slightly pressing with your hands as needed to make sure pretzels adhere. Place at least 1½ inches apart on prepared pans. Using your thumb, gently make an indentation in center of each ball. Refrigerate until firm, at least 15 minutes.
6. Bake until set and edges are lightly golden, 10 to 12 minutes. Immediately press down centers. Let cool on pans for 10 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on a wire rack.
7. Spoon 1½ teaspoons (9 grams) Strawberry Quick Jam into center of each cooled cookie. Drizzle Cream Cheese Glaze over cookies as desired. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 1 day.

CREAM CHEESE GLAZE

Makes about ¾ cup

4 ounces (113 grams) cream cheese, softened
¼ cup (30 grams) confectioners' sugar
2 tablespoons (30 grams) whole milk

1. In a small bowl, whisk together all ingredients until smooth and pourable.

STRAWBERRY PECAN COFFEE CAKE

Makes 1 (8-inch) cake

Crunchy Pecan Streusel meets a ripple of homemade strawberry jam in this wonderfully snackable coffee cake. Two layers of streusel means two times the toasted, nutty flavor of pecans and buttery brown sugar. And with fresh strawberries throughout the batter and strawberry jam layered on top, you're sure to get a berry-filled bite every time.

⅓ cup (76 grams) unsalted butter, softened
½ cup (100 grams) granulated sugar
¼ cup (55 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar
2 large eggs (100 grams), room temperature
3 teaspoons (12 grams) vanilla extract, divided
1½ cups (188 grams) all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon (5 grams) baking powder
¾ teaspoon (2.25 grams) kosher salt
¼ teaspoon (1.25 grams) baking soda
⅓ cup (80 grams) whole milk, room temperature
⅓ cup (80 grams) full-fat sour cream, room temperature
1 cup (155 grams) diced fresh strawberries
Pecan Streusel (recipe follows)
½ cup (148 grams) Strawberry Quick Jam (recipe follows)
1 cup (120 grams) confectioners' sugar
1 to 2 tablespoons (15 to 30 grams) heavy whipping cream

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Spray an 8-inch square baking pan with baking spray with flour. Line pan with parchment paper, letting excess extend over sides of pan.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter, granulated sugar, and brown sugar at medium speed until light and fluffy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add eggs, one at a time, beating until combined after each addition and stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Beat in 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, salt, and baking soda until combined. In a small bowl, whisk together milk and sour cream until combined. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour

mixture to butter mixture alternately with milk mixture, beginning and ending with flour mixture, beating until just combined after each addition and stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Carefully fold in diced strawberries.

4. Spread half of batter (about 1¾ cups or 420 grams) into prepared pan. Sprinkle ¾ cup (93 grams) Pecan Streusel over batter in pan, leaving a ¼-inch border around edges. Carefully spread remaining batter on top of streusel. Spread Strawberry Quick Jam on top of batter, and top with remaining Pecan Streusel.

5. Bake until golden and an instant-read thermometer inserted in center registers 205°F (96°C), 45 to 50 minutes. Let cool in pan for at least 10 minutes. Remove from pan.

6. In a small bowl, whisk together confectioners' sugar, 1 tablespoon (15 grams) cream, and remaining 2 teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla; add up to remaining 1 tablespoon (15 grams) cream until desired consistency is reached. Drizzle glaze over coffee cake. Best served warm.

Pecan Streusel

Makes about 2¼ cups

½ cup (110 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar*
¼ cup (42 grams) pecan flour
¼ cup (31 grams) all-purpose flour
3 tablespoons (42 grams) unsalted butter, melted
½ cup (57 grams) finely chopped pecans

1. In a small bowl, stir together brown sugar, flours, and melted butter with a fork until crumbly. Stir in pecans. Refrigerate for at least 30 minutes or until ready to use.

**We used C&H® Light Brown Sugar.*

Strawberry Quick Jam

Makes about 1½ cups

1 pound (454 grams) fresh strawberries, hulled and chopped
2¼ cups (250 grams) granulated sugar
2 tablespoons (30 grams) fresh lemon juice

1. In a small saucepan, bring all ingredients to a boil over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally; reduce heat to low, and cook, stirring frequently, until mixture is thick, 25 to 30 minutes. Transfer to a heatproof jar or container, cover, and let cool completely. Refrigerate for up to 3 weeks.

STRAWBERRY LAYER CAKE

Makes 1 (8-inch) cake

This strawberry-filled showstopper takes the classic strawberries and cream cake to a whole new level. Two luscious layers of strawberry cake, flavored with fresh strawberries and aromatic vanilla, are layered with velvety Vanilla Bean Buttercream before being topped with juicy, gem-toned Roasted Strawberries. It's the perfect cake for sharing and celebrating.

1 pound (454 grams) fresh strawberries, hulled
½ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened
1¼ cups (250 grams) granulated sugar
¼ cup (56 grams) vegetable oil
3 large eggs (150 grams), room temperature
1 tablespoon (15 grams) fresh lemon juice
1½ teaspoons (6 grams) vanilla extract
2 cups (250 grams) cake flour
1½ teaspoons (7.5 grams) baking powder
¾ teaspoon (2.25 grams) kosher salt
¼ teaspoon (1.25 grams) baking soda
½ cup (120 grams) whole milk, room temperature
Vanilla Bean Buttercream (recipe follows)
Roasted Strawberries (recipe on page 62; see Note)

1. In the work bowl of a food processor, pulse fresh strawberries until nearly smooth but a few small pieces remain. Transfer to a small saucepan; bring to a boil over medium heat. Reduce heat to medium-low, and cook, stirring frequently, until thickened and reduced to ¾ cup (225 grams), 25 to 30 minutes. Remove from heat, and let cool completely.

2. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Spray 2 (8-inch) round cake pans with baking spray with flour. Line bottom of pans with parchment paper.

3. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and sugar at medium speed until light and fluffy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. With mixer on low speed, slowly add oil, beating until combined. Add eggs, one at a time, beating until combined after each addition. Add cooled strawberry purée, lemon juice, and vanilla; beat until combined.

4. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, salt, and baking soda. With mixer on low speed, add flour mixture alternately with milk, beginning and ending with flour mixture, beating until just combined after each addition. Divide batter between prepared pans (about 2¾ cups or 560 grams each).

5. Bake until cakes spring back when lightly touched in center and a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, 25 to 30 minutes. Let cool in pans for 10 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks.

6. Level cooled cake layers, if desired. Place 1 cake layer on serving plate. Spread 1½ cups (320 grams) Vanilla Bean Buttercream on top of layer, and top with remaining cake layer. Spread remaining Vanilla Bean Buttercream on top and sides of cake as desired. Spoon Roasted Strawberries on top as desired. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour before serving. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

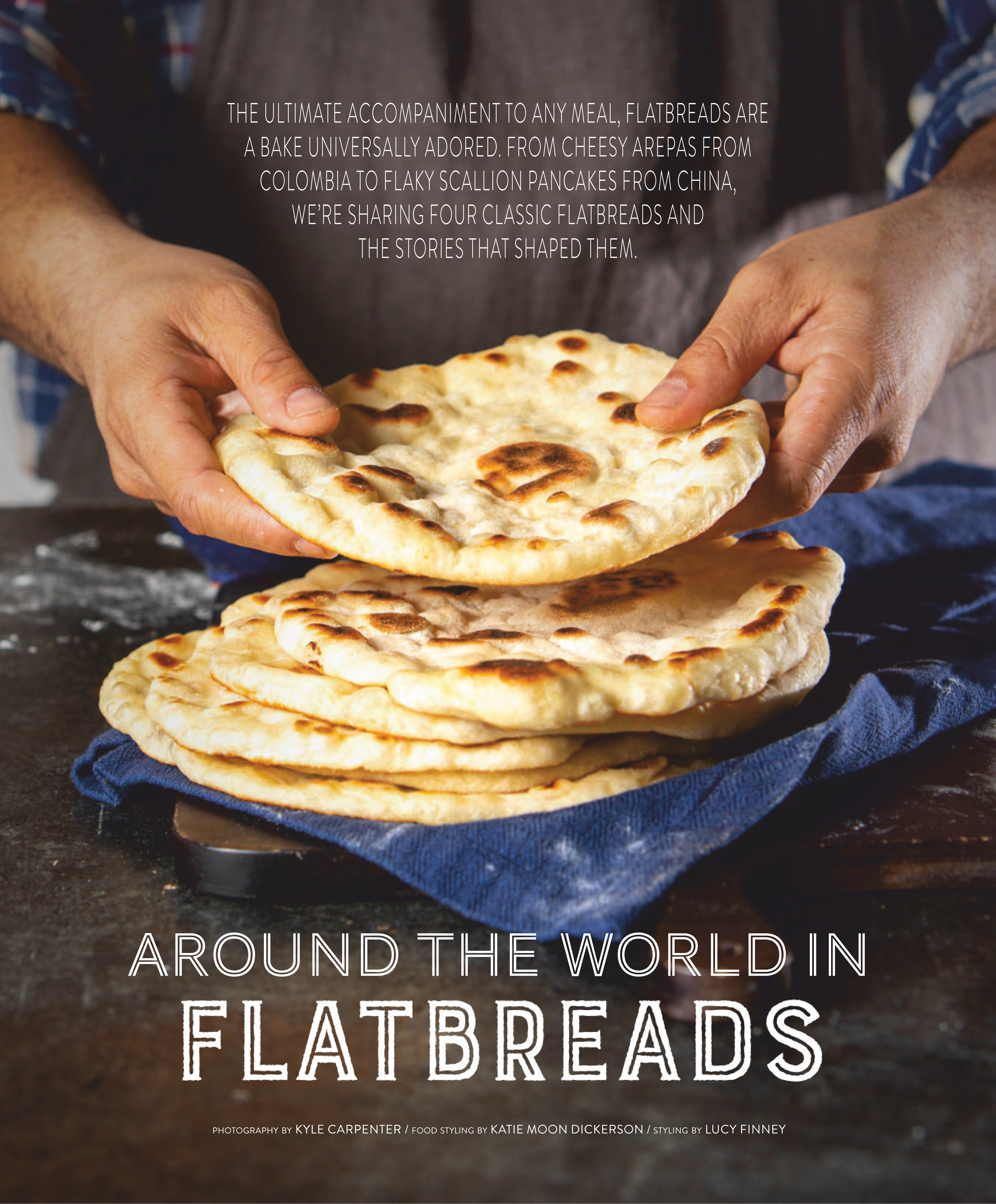
Note: *For the Roasted Strawberries in this recipe, you'll quarter your strawberries instead of halving them. Oven temperature and bake time stay the same. With the strawberries sliced into quarters, the yield after roasting will be closer to 1 cup.*

Vanilla Bean Buttercream

Makes about 3 cups

1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, softened
¼ teaspoon kosher salt
3 cups (360 grams) confectioners' sugar
¼ cup (60 grams) heavy whipping cream
1½ teaspoons (9 grams) vanilla bean paste

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and salt at medium speed until creamy, about 1 minute, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. With mixer on low speed, gradually add confectioners' sugar, beating until combined. Add cream and vanilla bean paste. Beat at high speed until fluffy, about 2 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Use immediately.



THE ULTIMATE ACCOMPANIMENT TO ANY MEAL, FLATBREADS ARE A BAKE UNIVERSALLY ADORED. FROM CHEESY AREPAS FROM COLOMBIA TO FLAKY SCALLION PANCAKES FROM CHINA, WE'RE SHARING FOUR CLASSIC FLATBREADS AND THE STORIES THAT SHAPED THEM.

AROUND THE WORLD IN FLATBREADS

PHOTOGRAPHY BY KYLE CARPENTER / FOOD STYLING BY KATIE MOON DICKERSON / STYLING BY LUCY FINNEY

COLOMBIA | AREPAS WITH MARIANA VELÁSQUEZ

ABOUT MARIANA:
“I grew up in Bogota, Colombia, surrounded by women who taught me how to cook. At the age of 17, I moved to the US with the dream of becoming a chef. I have been in the world of food for a couple of decades, worked in restaurants in New York and California, worked at *Saveur* and *Eating Well* magazines, and, 15 years ago, became a food stylist. Last year, I had the honor of publishing my own cookbook, *Colombiana*, with HarperCollins.”

THE ORIGIN:
“I grew up having an arepa and a glass of cold Milo (an Ovaltine-like chocolate drink) for breakfast every day. My grandmother made sprouted corn arepas for special lunches, served alongside her red bean stew. On road trips, we stopped at stands to eat sweet corn arepas filled with cheese and cooked on an open fire. I have been known to bring arepas wrapped in newspaper in my suitcase when I’m going out of town. Arepas change from region to region, and these cheesy arepas are my favorite, a perfect balance of sweet and savory.”

HOW TO SERVE:
“Arepas are typically served with butter and a pinch of salt. Some add fresh cheese called *quesito*. To make it more of a full meal, topping arepas with avocado, eggs, or even tuna is also traditional.”

ACROSS THE COUNTRY:
“Arepas are the unifying thread of Colombian cuisine. My country is one of the most biodiverse countries in the world—second to Brazil by area—which means there are many cuisines due to its varied landscapes and cultures. Arepas are ever-present at the breakfast table, as a side starch, and even as an afternoon bite. Depending on the region of Colombia, arepas can be made of different varieties of corn, yuca, green chickpeas; filled with cheese, pork cracklings, ground meat, and eggs. Arepas are often deep-fried, baked in clay ovens, cooked over hot coals, griddled, or grilled. Almost every place in the country will have its own version.”

CHEESY CORN AREPAS

Makes 12 to 15 medium-size arepas

Recipe by Mariana Velásquez

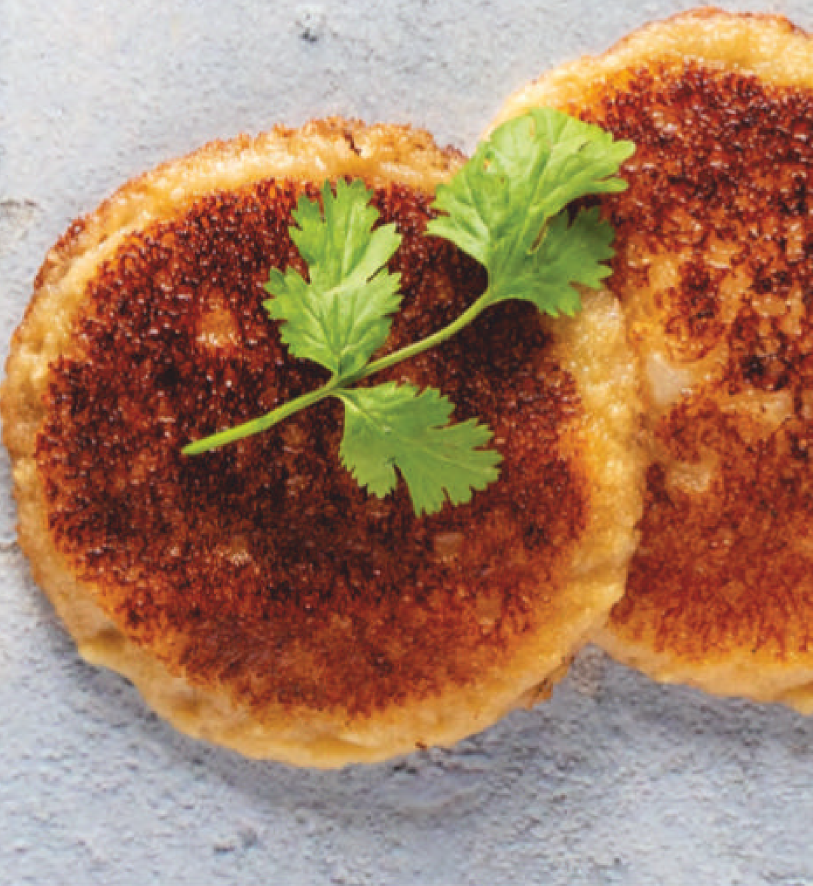
Comforting, satisfying, and oh so versatile, arepas are crisp, cheesy, and full of delicious corn flavor. Colombian arepas are known for their use of hominy corn, and this recipe saves time without sacrificing flavor by using canned hominy corn. Griddled to golden perfection, it’ll be impossible to eat just one.

2 (15.5-ounce) cans (425 grams) hominy corn, drained well and patted dry
8 ounces (226 grams) low-moisture mozzarella cheese, grated
¼ cup plus 2 tablespoons (84 grams) unsalted butter, room temperature
2 tablespoons (25 grams) coconut sugar or grated panela (see Note)
1 teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt
Sunflower oil, as needed
Salted butter, sliced avocado, and fresh cilantro sprigs, to serve

1. In the bowl of a large food processor, process corn, cheese, unsalted butter, coconut sugar or grated panela, and salt for about 30 seconds, stopping to scrape sides of bowl with a rubber spatula, making sure all corn gets processed. Process until you have a semismooth white dough, about 2 minutes. (Dough will have some texture from the corn but should not stick to your hands or fingers when touched.)
2. Preheat oven to 200°F (93°C). Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.
3. Transfer dough to a bowl. Divide dough into 12 portions, and shape each into a ball, oiling hands as needed to prevent sticking. Flatten each ball to about ½ inch thick, smoothing edges with your fingers. Place arepas on prepared pan.*
4. Heat a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. (Do not oil pan.) Working in batches, add arepas, and cook until nicely browned and cooked through, 3 to 4 minutes per side. (Do not overcrowd skillet.) Remove from skillet using a flat spatula, and place on a large serving plate. (Arepas can be kept in a warm oven.) Serve warm with salted butter, avocado, and cilantro.

**This is the perfect time to freeze the arepas. Stack them in between parchment paper squares, and place them in a reusable plastic bag.*

Note: *Panela is an unrefined whole cane sugar commonly used in Central and Latin America. Made from the juice of crushed sugarcane that’s been boiled and poured into molds, panela is most often found in blocks. Panela can be found in the international aisle at some grocery stores and at* amazon.com.



CHINA | SCALLION PANCAKES

WITH THE WOKS OF LIFE

ABOUT THE WOKS OF LIFE:
"*The Woks of Life* is a multigenerational family food blog founded by parents Bill and Judy Leung and their daughters, Sarah and Kaitlin, and has been called the 'bible of Chinese home cooking.' Their cookbook, *The Woks of Life: Recipes to Know and Love from a Chinese American Family* is a *New York Times* and *USA Today* best seller. The family lives in New Jersey, where they cook, write, and photograph recipes together—and continue their eternal debate over what's for dinner."

THE ORIGIN:
"We all grew up enjoying scallion pancakes, especially Judy, who grew up in Shanghai, China, before moving to the US at 16. Because they're so easy to make, with relatively few ingredients, they're enjoyed everywhere in China—at home, from street vendors, and even in restaurants. They're comfort food! This particular recipe, however, was developed by Bill, who was inspired to develop this recipe after watching street vendors in China craft scallion pancakes for eager customers."

HOW TO SERVE:
"Scallion pancakes are usually a breakfast food or street snack. You may also see them served as an appetizer."

ACROSS THE COUNTRY:
"Ovens aren't common in China, so if there's a flour-based dough being made, it's usually going to be steamed, boiled, fried, or pan-fried. In this case, the scallion pancake dough is pan-fried until crispy."

9-LAYER CHINESE SCALLION PANCAKES

Makes 2 pancakes

Recipe by *The Woks of Life*

This nine-layer scallion pancakes recipe gives you a nice, layered, aromatic pancake that goes great with a hot soup, a Chinese weekend brunch, or any time you have a craving for a savory snack.

Dough:
2½ cups (313 grams) all-purpose flour
½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt
⅛ teaspoon granulated sugar
⅛ teaspoon Chinese five-spice powder (optional)
¾ cup (180 grams) water

Sauce:
2 tablespoons (30 grams) soy sauce
2 tablespoons (30 grams) water
1 scallion (19 grams), chopped
½ teaspoon (2 grams) granulated sugar
½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) sesame seeds
¼ teaspoon mashed garlic (optional)

3 tablespoons (42 grams) neutral oil, divided, plus more as needed
4 to 5 scallions (76 to 95 grams), chopped and divided
1 tablespoon (9 grams) sesame seeds (optional), divided
1 teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt, divided

1. For pancakes: In a large bowl, stir together flour, salt, sugar, and five-spice powder (if using). Add ¾ cup (180 grams) water, and mix to form a shaggy dough. Knead until it forms a smooth ball, about 5 minutes. Cover with a damp cloth. Let stand for about 1 hour.

2. For sauce: In a small bowl, whisk together soy sauce, 2 tablespoons (30 grams) water, scallion, sugar, sesame seeds, and garlic (if using).

3. Divide dough in half (about 243 grams each). Roll half of dough into a 15x9-inch rectangle. (Keep remaining dough covered with damp cloth.) Make a 3-inch-long cut at 5 inches down one long side and then at 10 inches; repeat on opposite long side. Rub about 1½ teaspoons (7.5 grams) neutral oil all over surface of rectangle, and sprinkle with half of scallions, half of sesame seeds (if using), and half of salt.

4. With dough oriented vertically, starting at bottom, fold side flaps of dough over center piece. Fold that entire rectangle forward onto center level. Fold center side flaps over, and repeat. Roll into about a 7x5½-inch rectangle (about ¾ inch thick). (Take care not to roll too firmly, as you don't want the dough layers to bind and you want to keep some small pockets of air between them.)

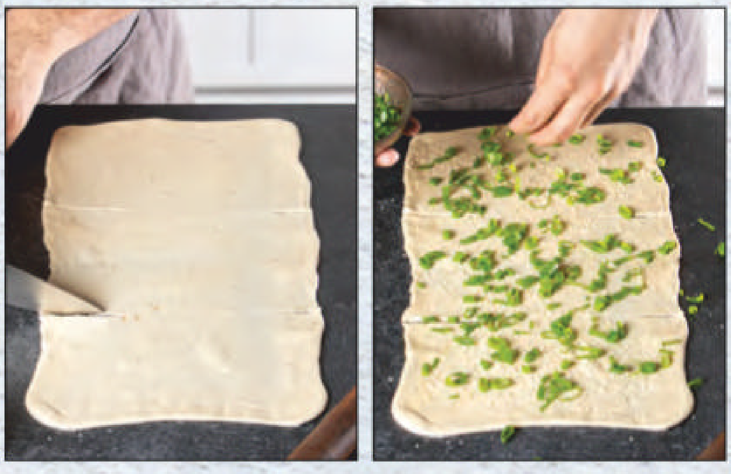
5. In a 10-inch saucepan, heat 2 tablespoons (28 grams) neutral oil over medium heat. Add pancake; cover and cook until golden brown, 3 to 5 minutes per side. Transfer to a cutting board, slice, and serve with sauce.

6. Repeat procedure with remaining dough, remaining 1½ teaspoons (7.5 grams) oil, remaining scallions, remaining salt, and remaining sesame seeds (if using). Add more oil as needed.

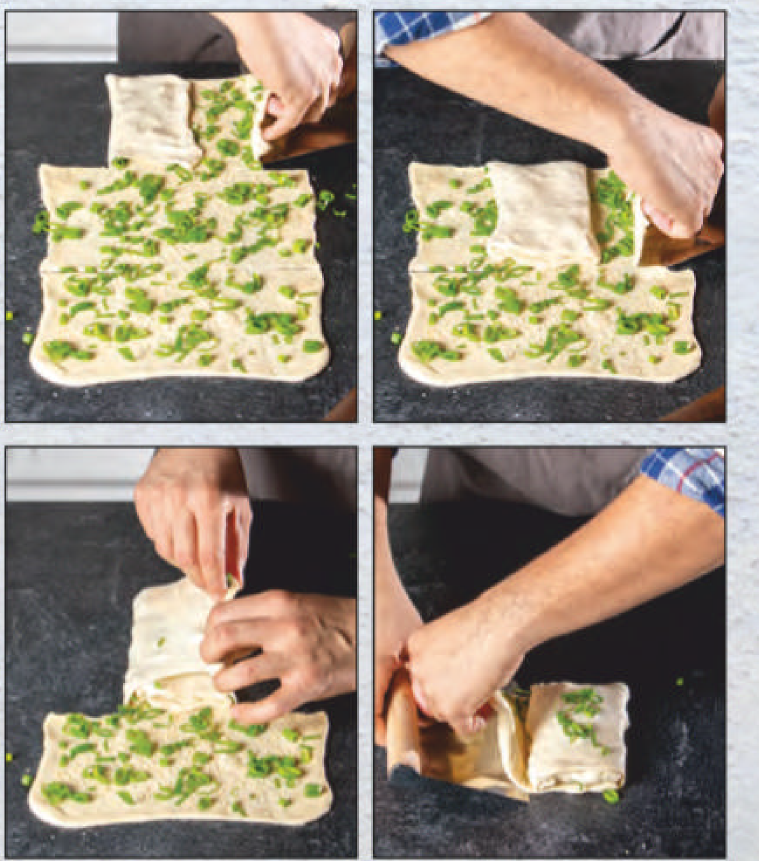
Note: *To freeze, place a layer of wax paper, parchment paper, or plastic wrap between each pancake and store in a resealable plastic bag.*

SCALLION PANCAKE SHAPING

In order to achieve all of those delicious layers, this nine-layer scallion pancake requires some precise filling and folding



1. Roll half of dough into a 15x9-inch rectangle. (Keep remaining dough covered with damp cloth.) Make a 3-inch-long cut at 5 inches down one long side and then at 10 inches; repeat on opposite long side. Rub about 1½ teaspoons (7.5 grams) neutral oil all over surface of rectangle, and sprinkle with half of scallions, half of sesame seeds (if using), and half of salt.



2. With dough oriented vertically, starting at bottom, fold side flaps of dough over center piece. Fold that entire rectangle forward onto center level. Fold center side flaps over, and repeat. Roll into about a 7x5½-inch rectangle (about ¾ inch thick). (Take care not to roll too firmly, as you don't want the dough layers to bind and you want to keep some small pockets of air between them.)

GREECE | PITA WITH BELLA KARRAGIANNIDIS

ABOUT BELLA:
"First and foremost, I am an artist. Everything I do and share through *Ful-filled* (*full-filled.com*) comes from a deep passion for beauty and connection. Whether I am in the kitchen or the garden . . . whether I have a camera or a paintbrush in my hand . . . I feel that my purpose in life is to create and inspire through everything I do. While most people assume I am Greek, I was actually adopted into the Greek culture after marrying my husband. My first foray into Greek culture was via the kitchen. My in-laws started teaching me traditional Greek cooking, and slowly but surely, preparing Greek cuisine became a key part of my identity as a creative."

THE ORIGIN:
"Pita is the oldest bread in the world, and the word *pita* is actually from the Greek language. The word *pita* has two different meanings in the Greek language—one of them being the word used specifically to describe this flatbread. Nothing quite compares to the fluffy-on-the-inside, golden-crisp-on-the-outside experience of eating Greek pita bread. I will never forget the first gyro I ate in Greece or scooping up my father-in-law's homemade tzatziki with a piece of his handmade pita."

HOW TO SERVE:
"Greek pita bread is an everyday food. It is most recognizably served as the foundation for gyros, but pita bread is also amazing served as a soft and fluffy vehicle for scooping up dips and spreads."

ACROSS THE COUNTRY:
In Greece, the word *pita* can refer to both a savory pie such as spanakopita and the flatbread found here. Across Greece, pita bread is often accompanied by hummus, baba ganoush, tzatziki, or tabbouleh for dipping or used as a wrap for *souvlaki* and gyros. Contrary to popular belief, it's not always typical for pita to have a pocket. And though it's now a popular flatbread across the Mediterranean, its roots actually trace back to the ancient civilizations of the Middle East.

GREEK PITA BREAD

Makes 8 pita breads

Recipe by Bella Karragiannidis

Pita is a Greek word that is used in the Greek language to describe flatbread, pies, and cakes. Greek flatbread that is known as pita is unique for its dimples and lack of a hollow pocket, and requires just a handful of simple ingredients. With its golden, fluffy, and tender characteristics, it's best enjoyed with dips and spreads or filled with meat, vegetables, and tzatziki for a classic Greek gyro.

1⅓	**cups (320 grams) warm water**
2¼	**teaspoons (7 grams) active dry yeast**
1	**teaspoon (4 grams) granulated sugar**
2	**tablespoons (28 grams) olive oil, plus more for greasing**
1½	**teaspoons (8 grams) fine sea salt**
3	**cups plus 2 tablespoons plus 1 teaspoon (400 grams) bread flour**
1	**tablespoon (14 grams) neutral oil**

1. In a large bowl, combine 1⅓ cups (320 grams) warm water, yeast, and sugar. Let stand until slightly foamy, 10 to 15 minutes.

2. Stir olive oil and salt into yeast mixture. Gradually add flour, mixing with your hand. Mix with your hand until dough starts to come together. Turn out onto a heavily floured surface. Knead until dough becomes smooth, 5 to 6 minutes, re-flouring work surface as needed.

3. Oil a large bowl. Place dough in bowl, cover, and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°F/24°C) until doubled in size, about 45 minutes.

4. Punch down dough. Divide into 8 portions, and shape into rounds. Let stand for 15 minutes.

5. Heavily flour each portion of dough, and roll or press rounds into 8-inch circles (about ¼ inch thick). Press down firmly with your fingers to create dimples in dough.

6. Heat a large skillet over medium heat. Add neutral oil to hot skillet. Add 1 dough round, and cook until it starts to puff up, 1 to 2 minutes. Turn, and cook until nicely golden, 1 to 2 minutes. Remove pita from skillet, and place in a clean cotton towel. Repeat with remaining dough. Serve warm, or let cool completely inside towel. Store in a resealable plastic bag for up to 4 days, or freeze in a resealable plastic freezer bag for up to 3 months.

INDIA | PARATHAS WITH DINELLE LOBO

ABOUT DINELLE:
"Whenever we meet as a family or during festive seasons and occasions, the first discussion is the menu and then the rest is spoken about. My siblings attended culinary school, and my mother used to specialize in cake-making. I did not venture into the same field because they did it all and left me with the dish-washing. My professional background is mass media, but during the COVID-19 pandemic, being stuck indoors led me to putting my hands into baking. I was given a Bundt pan by my mom (it's 40-plus years old), and I started to bake. That's when I chanced upon Brian Hart Hoffman and Baking School with Williams Sonoma and the *Bake from Scratch* cookbooks! This led to a newfound passion, to create and make something to share with family, neighbors, and friends. Brian made baking look so effortless and easy! My mother learned some dishes from her mom, and since I live close to my mother, I now have the opportunity to collaborate and bake with her as well."

THE ORIGIN:
"Parathas and flatbreads are important to Indian cooking since our meals are curry-based (gravy-based), and the combination of a starch (rice) or chapati/paratha eaten with the curry adds flavor. Plus, one uses the flatbread or rice to soak up the curry, and we've always been told it's part of maintaining a balanced diet."

HOW TO SERVE:
"*Aloo* paratha is typically a breakfast dish from Punjab served with pickle and curd."

ACROSS THE COUNTRY:
"Each region in India serves different variations of flatbread. There are *rumali* rotis, fluffy naan, and paratha in the north, which go well with a chicken tikka or butter chicken or a mutton gravy. Our community (an East Indian Catholic community) traditionally makes handbreads called *chitiaps*; they are like rice crêpes. The area that we live in, Mumbai, is primarily a coastal region, so this kind of bread goes well with fish curries, fried fish, and more. They also make puris that are served with vegetables. The south of India makes lovely fluffy *appams*, fluffy in the center and crisp around the edges, eaten with coconut-based curries or meat preparations or even a sunny-side up. Or there are Malabar paratha that have layers of flaky goodness!"

SCHEZWAN ALOO PARATHAS

Makes 18 parathas

Recipe by Dinelle Lobo

A staple in many North Indian homes, these parathas are made with whole wheat flour and filled with a spiced, aromatic mashed potato filling. The Schezwan chutney adds notes of spicy red chile, pungent ginger-garlic, and a tingly buzz of Schezwan pepper, while the potato mellows the spice, creating a rich, savory flatbread.

2	**white potatoes (250 grams), peeled**
2	**tablespoons (28 grams) neutral oil**
1	**cup (130 grams) chopped white onion (1 small white onion)**
½	**cup (36 grams) chopped green onion (2 green onions)**
2½	**tablespoons (37 grams) Schezwan chutney***
1	**teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt**
3	**cups (381 grams) bread flour**
1	**cup (130 grams) whole wheat flour**
2	**tablespoons (28 grams) pure ghee**
1⅓	**cups (320 grams) water**
6	**tablespoons (84 grams) pure ghee, melted**

Greek yogurt, to serve

1. In a medium saucepan, bring potatoes and water to cover to a boil over medium-high heat; cover and cook until fork-tender, about 40 minutes. (The potatoes can also be cooked in a pressure cooker for 10 minutes). Drain well, and mash potatoes.

2. In a medium skillet, heat neutral oil over medium heat. Add white onion, and cook until soft and translucent, 8 to 10 minutes. Add green onion, Schezwan chutney, and salt, and cook until green onion is soft, 1 to 2 minutes. Stir in mashed potatoes, and remove from heat.

3. In the bowl of a stand mixer, whisk together flours. Add ghee, and using your fingers, pinch ghee into flour mixture until small coated crumbs are evenly distributed throughout. Using the dough hook attachment, with mixer on low speed, slowly add 1⅓ cups (320 grams) water, beating until combined; scrape sides of bowl. Beat until a smooth ball forms, about 2 minutes. Cover with damp cloth and let stand at room temperature for 20 minutes. (This process is done by hand in Indian kitchens by mixing ingredients in a wide bowl and hand kneading for 2 minutes).

4. On a lightly floured surface, divide dough into 18 portions (about 47 grams each), and shape into small rounds. Press 1 dough ball into a 4½-inch disk. (Keep remaining dough covered with damp cloth to prevent it from drying out.) Place 1 tablespoon (17 grams) potato mixture in center, and pull edges up over filling, pinching at center to seal. Place filled dough, seam side down, and roll into a 4½-inch circle. Repeat with remaining dough and remaining filling. (Do not stack finished dough or it will stick.)

5. Heat a 10-inch cast-iron skillet over medium heat.

6. Lightly brush top of 1 filled dough circle with melted ghee. Place, ghee side down, in skillet, and cook until golden brown, about 2 minutes per side, brushing top with melted ghee before turning. Transfer to a plate. Repeat with remaining dough circles and remaining melted ghee. Serve immediately with Greek yogurt.

**We used Ching's Secret Schezwan Chutney, available at* amazon.com.

A NEW SEASON OF Spring Cakes

CELEBRATE THE BEGINNING OF SPRING WITH OUR ASSORTMENT OF BRIGHT, FLAVORFUL EASTER CAKES. BEGINNING WITH A BANOFFEE CAKE DECORATED WITH CARAMELIZED BANANAS AND ENDING WITH A BUTTERY SMOOTH SOUTHERN COCONUT CAKE, WE HAVE A BAKE FOR EVERY SWEET TOOTH THIS SEASON.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JIM BATHIE
RECIPE DEVELOPMENT BY AMANDA STABILE
FOOD STYLING BY KATIE MOON DICKERSON
STYLING BY KATHLEEN VARNER

Banoffee Cake
page 79

Carrot Cake
page 79

CARROT CAKE

Makes 1 (8-inch) cake

Spring is finally here, bringing with it the timeless Carrot Cake. Packed with aromatic spices, sweet vanilla, and heaps of grated carrot, our recipe produces a batter that can't be beat. Pile the layers high and cover the exterior with our sweet Cream Cheese Frosting for a stunning springtime treat.

2 cups (250 grams) all-purpose flour
1¼ cups (250 grams) granulated sugar
⅔ cup (147 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar
4 teaspoons (8 grams) ground cinnamon
2 teaspoons (10 grams) baking powder
1 teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt
1 teaspoon (2 grams) ground ginger
½ teaspoon (2.5 grams) baking soda
½ teaspoon (1 gram) ground nutmeg
1 cup (224 grams) neutral oil
½ cup (120 grams) whole buttermilk, room temperature
4 large eggs (200 grams), room temperature
1 tablespoon (13 grams) vanilla extract
3 cups (300 grams) lightly packed grated carrots*
Cream Cheese Frosting (recipe follows)
Garnish: peeled whole carrots with green tops

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Spray 2 (8-inch) round cake pans with baking spray with flour. Line bottom of pans with parchment paper.
2. In a large bowl, whisk together flour, sugars, cinnamon, baking powder, salt, ginger, baking soda, and nutmeg.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together oil, buttermilk, eggs, and vanilla. Add oil mixture to flour mixture, whisking just until combined. Fold in grated carrots. Divide batter between prepared pans (about 3 cups or 750 grams each).
4. Bake until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, 35 to 40 minutes. Let cool in pan for 15 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on a wire rack.
5. Using a serrated knife or cake leveler, level cooled cake layers, if desired. Place 1 cake layer on a serving plate. Spread 1½ cups (360 grams) Cream Cheese Frosting on top. Place remaining cake layer, cut side down, on top. Spread remaining Cream Cheese Frosting on top and sides of cake. Using a large offset spatula and turntable, texture sides and top of cake. Serve immediately, or refrigerate until ready to serve. Garnish with whole carrots, if desired.

**Save the green ends of the carrots you peel to use later as an addition to your festive garnish of whole carrots!*

CREAM CHEESE FROSTING

Makes about 6 cups

16 ounces (454 grams) cream cheese, softened
¾ cup (170 grams) unsalted butter, softened
2 teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract
½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt
7½ cups (900 grams) confectioners' sugar

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat cream cheese and butter at medium speed until creamy, 3 to 4 minutes. Beat in vanilla and salt. With mixer on low speed, gradually add confectioners' sugar, beating until smooth. Beat at high speed until light and fluffy, 2 to 3 minutes. Use immediately.

BANOFFEE CAKE

Makes 1 (9-inch) cake

Utilizing the tropical flavor and soft texture of mashed banana, this Banoffee Cake boasts an incredibly soft and tender crumb. Expertly coated with every ounce of golden-brown flecked Browned Butter Frosting, the cake then receives a showstopping finish with irresistibly sweet and gooey Caramelized Bananas spooned on top.

3 cups (375 grams) all-purpose flour
1½ cups (300 grams) granulated sugar
¾ cup (165 grams) firmly packed dark brown sugar
2 teaspoons (10 grams) baking powder
1 teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt
½ teaspoon (2.5 grams) baking soda
½ teaspoon (1 gram) ground cinnamon
2 cups (460 grams) mashed banana (about 4 large bananas)
1½ cups (360 grams) whole buttermilk, room temperature
½ cup (112 grams) vegetable oil
4 large eggs (200 grams), room temperature
2 teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract
Browned Butter Frosting (recipe follows)
Caramelized Bananas (recipe follows)

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Spray 2 (9-inch) round cake pans with baking spray with flour. Line bottom of pans with parchment paper.
2. In a large bowl, whisk together flour, sugars, baking powder, salt, baking soda, and cinnamon.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together mashed banana, buttermilk, oil, eggs, and vanilla. Add banana mixture to flour mixture, and whisk until just combined. Divide batter between prepared pans (about 3½ cups or 1,000 grams each).
4. Bake until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, 40 to 45 minutes. Let cool in pans for 10 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on a wire rack.
5. Level cooled cake layers, if desired. Place 1 cake layer on a serving platter. Spread 2 cups (415 grams) Browned Butter Frosting on top, spreading to edges with an offset spatula. Top with remaining cake layer. Spread remaining Browned Butter Frosting on top and sides of cake as desired, creating a slight border along top edge of cake. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour.
6. When ready to serve, top cake with Caramelized Bananas. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

BROWNED BUTTER FROSTING

Makes about 6 cups

3 cups (681 grams) unsalted butter, softened and divided
1½ teaspoons (6 grams) vanilla extract*
1 teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt
7½ cups (900 grams) confectioners' sugar
3 tablespoons (45 grams) heavy whipping cream

1. In a medium saucepan, melt 2 cups (454 grams) butter over medium heat. Cook, stirring occasionally, until butter turns a golden-brown color and smells almost nutty, about 10 minutes. Remove from heat, and pour into a shallow dish or rimmed baking sheet. Refrigerate for 15 to 20 minutes; cut into squares, and let stand at room temperature until softened.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat remaining 1 cup (227 grams) butter at medium speed until smooth, about 1 minute. Add browned butter, vanilla, and salt; beat at medium-high speed until light and fluffy, 2 to 4 minutes. With mixer on low speed,

gradually add confectioners' sugar, beating until combined and stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Beat in cream. Use immediately.

**We used Rodelle Pure Vanilla Extract.*

Caramelized Bananas

Makes about 1½ cups

- 3 **tablespoons (42 grams) unsalted butter**
- ¼ **cup (55 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar**
- 3 **medium bananas (354 grams), cut into ¼-inch-thick slices**

1. In a medium skillet, melt butter over medium heat. Add brown sugar, stirring until combined. Cook, stirring frequently, until sugar is melted. Turn off heat, and add bananas. Gently stir until combined and bananas are coated. Transfer to a heatproof container, and let cool completely.

Southern
Coconut Cake
page 83

Milk Chocolate
Sheet Cake
page 84

SOUTHERN COCONUT CAKE

Makes 1 (8-inch) cake

Nothing says spring quite like our take on the classic Southern coconut cake. Flawlessly smooth and creamy with every tender crumb, this cake gets its coconut flavor from unrefined coconut oil and coconut extract. Coated with a fluffy Coconut Swiss Meringue Buttercream and sweetened flaked coconut, every bite will have you on cloud nine.

1½	**cups (340 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
2	**cups (400 grams) granulated sugar***
½	**cup (103 grams) unrefined coconut oil, melted**
3	**large eggs (150 grams), room temperature**
1	**teaspoon (4 grams) coconut extract**
½	**teaspoon (2 grams) vanilla extract**
3½	**cups (438 grams) cake flour**
2	**teaspoons (10 grams) baking powder**
½	**teaspoon (2.5 grams) baking soda**
½	**teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt**
1¼	**cups (300 grams) whole buttermilk, room temperature**
1½	**cups (143 grams) sweetened flaked coconut**

Coconut Swiss Meringue Buttercream (recipe follows)

Garnish: sweetened flaked coconut

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Spray 3 (9-inch) round cake pans with baking spray with flour. Line bottom of pans with parchment paper.

2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter, sugar, and melted coconut oil at medium speed until pale and fluffy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition and stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Beat in extracts.

3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. With mixer on medium-low speed, add flour mixture to butter mixture in three additions alternately with buttermilk, beginning and ending with flour mixture, beating until combined after each addition. Fold in flaked coconut until just combined. Divide among prepared pans (about 2½ cups or 600 grams each), smoothing with an offset spatula as needed.

4. Bake until golden and a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, 30 to 35 minutes. Let cool in pans for 10 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks.

5. Level cooled cake layers, if desired. Place 1 cake layer on a serving platter. Spoon 1½ cups (270 grams) Coconut Swiss Meringue Buttercream on top, spreading to edges with an offset spatula. Top with second cake layer, and spread 1½ cups (270 grams) buttercream on top. Top with remaining cake layer. Spread remaining Coconut Swiss Meringue Buttercream on top and sides of cake. Carefully press flaked coconut into top and sides of cake, if desired. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

**We used C&H® Granulated Sugar.*

COCONUT SWISS MERINGUE BUTTERCREAM

Makes about 8 cups

10	**large egg whites (300 grams)**
2½	**cups (500 grams) granulated sugar**
½	**teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt**
¼	**teaspoon cream of tartar**
2½	**cups (567 grams) unsalted butter, cubed and softened**
¼	**cup (51 grams) unrefined coconut oil, melted**

1. In the heatproof bowl of a stand mixer, whisk together egg whites, sugar, salt, and cream of tartar. Place bowl over a saucepan of simmering water, and cook, stirring frequently, until sugar dissolves and an instant-read thermometer registers 160°F (71°C), 5 to 10 minutes.

2. Carefully return bowl to stand mixer. Using the whisk attachment, beat at high speed until cooled, about 10 minutes. Reduce mixer speed to medium-high. Add butter, 1 tablespoon at a time, beating until combined after each addition. With mixer on medium-high speed, add melted coconut oil in a slow, steady stream; beat until mixture thickens and comes together. (Frosting may look curdled at first, but keep beating and it will come together). Beat until frosting is smooth. Use immediately.

MILK CHOCOLATE SHEET CAKE

Makes 1 (13x9-inch) cake

We don't hold back in this one-layer chocolate lover's dream. Filled with decadent milk chocolate and covered in creamy Whipped Chocolate Frosting, this soft-crumbed cake gets a double dose of sweet chocolate indulgence. For an extra springy touch, add chocolate curls and candy-coated milk chocolate eggs for a bright pop of color.

6	**ounces (170 grams) 45% cacao milk chocolate, chopped**
½	**cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, cubed**
1½	**cups (300 grams) granulated sugar**
1½	**cups (360 grams) water**
1¼	**cups (275 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar***
¾	**cup (180 grams) whole milk**
⅓	**cup (25 grams) unsweetened cocoa powder**
1	**cup (240 grams) sour cream**
3	**large eggs (150 grams), lightly beaten**
1½	**teaspoons (6 grams) vanilla extract**
3	**cups (375 grams) all-purpose flour**
1	**tablespoon (15 grams) baking powder**
1½	**teaspoons (4.5 grams) kosher salt**
½	**teaspoon (2.5 grams) baking soda**

Whipped Chocolate Frosting (recipe follows)

Garnish: chocolate curls, candy-coated milk chocolate eggs

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Spray a 13x9-inch baking pan with baking spray with flour. Line pan with parchment paper, letting excess extend over sides of pan.

2. In a large bowl, place chopped chocolate and butter.

3. In a medium saucepan, whisk together granulated sugar, 1½ cups (360 grams) water, brown sugar, and milk; bring to a boil over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally to make sure sugar dissolves. Whisk in cocoa. Pour sugar mixture over chocolate mixture, and let stand for 2 minutes. Stir until chocolate and butter are melted and mixture is combined. Whisk in sour cream, eggs, and vanilla.

4. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, salt, and baking soda. Gradually add flour mixture to chocolate mixture, whisking just until combined. Pour batter into prepared pan.

5. Bake until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, 45 to 50 minutes. Let cool completely in pan.

6. Using excess parchment as handles, remove cooled cake from pan. Spread Whipped Chocolate Frosting on top as desired. Garnish with chocolate curls and chocolate eggs, if desired. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

**We used C&H® Light Brown Sugar.*

WHIPPED CHOCOLATE FROSTING

Makes about 6 cups

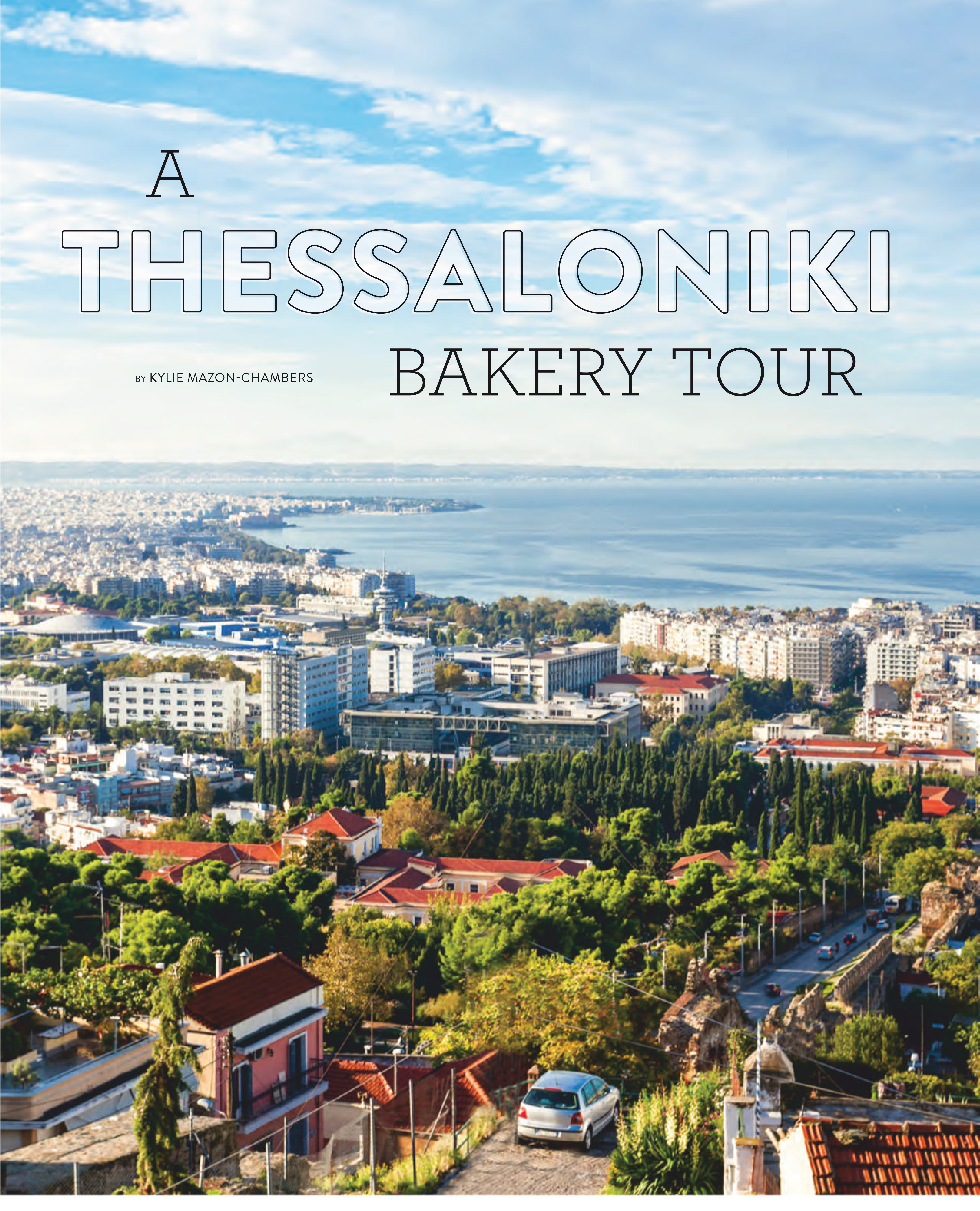
1½	**cups (340 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
5	**cups (600 grams) confectioners' sugar**
½	**cup (43 grams) unsweetened cocoa powder**
1	**teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt**
¼	**cup (60 grams) whole milk**

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter at medium speed until creamy, 2 to 3 minutes.

2. In a large bowl, whisk together confectioners' sugar, cocoa, and salt. Gradually add confectioners' sugar mixture to butter, beating until combined. Add milk, and beat at high speed until light and fluffy, about 3 minutes. Use immediately.

A THESSALONIKI BAKERY TOUR

BY KYLIE MAZON-CHAMBERS



JOIN BRIAN HART HOFFMAN AND KYLIE MAZON-CHAMBERS AS THEY WANDER THE STREETS OF THESSALONIKI, GREECE, IN SEARCH OF SOME OF THE REGION'S BEST BAKERIES

It's a truth universally acknowledged: traveling is best when done with friends! Last summer, I had the opportunity to travel to Thessaloniki, Greece, to learn about one of Greece's top exports, feta PDO, with one of my good friends and editor-in-chief, Brian Hart Hoffman. From eating cheese with every meal to enjoying Greek wine, beaches, and sunshine, we couldn't have asked for a more quintessentially Greek experience. In a place where "food is an expression of love and hospitality," Brian and I both fit right in. Starting each morning with a stroll along the waterfront, popping into a café for a freddo cappuccino and pastry, it was love at first sight, bite, and sip.

LOCATION PHOTOGRAPHY BY KYLIE MAZON-CHAMBERS
RECIPE PHOTOGRAPHY BY KYLE CARPENTER / RECIPE DEVELOPMENT BY AMANDA STABILE
FOOD STYLING BY KATIE MOON DICKERSON / STYLING BY MARY BETH JONES

OLYMPUS
Feta
ORIGINAL

PDO (PROTECTED DESIGNATION OF ORIGIN)

When shopping for Feta, be sure to look for the PDO (Protected Designation of Origin) symbol, which ensures the quality, uniqueness, and authenticity of the Feta you buy. Feta PDO, a flagship product of mainland Greece and Lesvos, achieves its unmatched quality thanks to its specific surrounding geographical environment, accompanied by traditions and cultural practices that have been in place for centuries. Feta with PDO certification also promises a regulated production and maturation process that yields Feta with fuller flavor, brighter white coloring, and consistent but delightfully soft structure.

(This page, clockwise) A look at the feta PDO production process; a tower and sampling of feta PDO; a taste of feta PDO fresh from the source. (Opposite, clockwise from top left) Brian enjoys a fresh koulouri; the cobblestone streets of Thessaloniki; our Greek tour guide enjoys a glass of wine at lunch; a city right on the Thermaic Gulf of the Aegean Sea.

Thessaloniki is the second-largest city in Greece after Athens, with a population of around 814,000 people. In the summer, the city is a hot spot for late-night merriment; it's filled with life into the late hours of the night (or early morning hours, depending on how you look at it). It's a port city and a major gateway to the Balkans, southeastern Europe, and North African countries like Egypt and Libya. The region's multicultural history is evident in the food scene, with access to spices and ingredients previously not available in other parts of the country. But there's one local ingredient in Greek cuisine that stands above all others: feta.

So, what is feta PDO? PDO, or protected designation of origin, is a geographical indicator created by the EU to protect products produced, processed, and prepared from a certain region, area, or country. To be called feta, the tangy white cheese must be produced in Greece; otherwise, it's "Greek-style" or "feta-style" cheese. There are other rigorous requirements that must be met for feta. It must be made of either sheep's milk or a combination of sheep's milk and up to 30% goat's milk. In the process of making it, the milk is curdled and then cut into cubes. Those are then moved to molds where the curds can drain. Next, the salinity is adjusted. Finally, the feta is stored in brine for a two-month maturation period before it's packaged and sold. Over the course of the trip, we visited two feta factories, Mevgal and Hellenic Dairies, which produce feta as well as other Greek dairy products, like yogurt.

One of my favorite stops on the trip was a tour through the lively Kapani market. It is the oldest market in the city, just off the main square, and is filled with fresh meat, vegetables, seafood, spices, and home goods. A walk through the market feels like traveling back in time, and of course, as Thessaloniki is a port city, the stalls selling seafood can't be missed! One of the main exports of Greece is its olives and olive oil. It was incredible to taste the difference the terroir of the mainland and islands has on each variety of one of the foods Greece is most known for. I recommend picking up *koulouri* (sesame-coated bread rings with a crisp outside and soft interior) from street vendors to snack on.

The Greeks certainly enjoy every meal. Our lunches and dinners lasted about three hours each. By the time we were done with lunch, it was just about time for dinner! Every restaurant brought out an array of appetizers to start. Almost every meal began with a Greek salad made with fresh tomatoes, cucumber, and shaved onion topped with feta. In one of my favorite preparations, feta was served as a baked appetizer wrapped in phyllo dough with sesame seeds and drizzled with honey. The appetizer courses were followed by a large meat platter filled with grilled lamb, chicken souvlaki, and beef kabobs or seafood, like octopus. After we'd take a lap to stretch, the desserts would arrive. Typically, the meal wound down with strained yogurt (what we know as Greek yogurt) topped with honey or jam, semolina cakes, or other pastries.

If you need an excuse for waking up early, look no further than the extensive offerings of Thessaloniki's pastries, specifically its breakfast pies! There are many types of *pites*, or pies, in Greek cuisine that have been staples dating back to antiquities. Made from flaky phyllo (also spelled "filo") dough, they can be served in a variety of shapes and filled with a variety of sweet or savory fillings.

Phyllo dough is a paper-thin dough, as thin as sheets of tissue paper. (You should be able to see your hand through it.) The sheets are layered with butter or oil and baked to create a base of flaky pastry. Because it is difficult to get it so thin and even, many home cooks shy away from making it themselves (myself included) and opt to use store-bought dough instead. The fillings of the pies can vary depending on the region of the country. Thessaloniki, located in the northern part of Greece's mainland, produces the rich and tangy feta that traditional tiropita cheese pies are filled with. Brian and I set out to sample a variety of the city's sweets on a self-guided pastry tour.

SPANAKOPITA

Makes 1 (9-inch) pie

A traditional Greek spinach pie, spanakopita is everything you want in a savory bake. Bright and herby, accented with lemon, and full of tangy feta cheese and spinach, this crisp phyllo pie can be served as a standalone dish or alongside your Greek feast. Simple yet stunning, this Greek staple is a favorite for a reason.

3 tablespoons (42 grams) extra-virgin olive oil
½ yellow onion (87 grams), thinly sliced
2 cloves garlic (4 grams), minced
1 teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt
½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) freshly cracked black pepper
2 (10-ounce) packages frozen chopped spinach, thawed and drained
1½ cups (230 grams) crumbled feta cheese
⅓ cup (7 grams) chopped fresh basil
¼ cup (20 grams) shredded Parmesan cheese
¼ cup (7 grams) chopped fresh dill
2 large eggs (100 grams), room temperature
1 teaspoon (3 grams) lemon zest
15 sheets (about 188 grams) frozen phyllo pastry, thawed according to package directions
¾ cup (170 grams) unsalted butter, melted
Garnish: chopped fresh basil, chopped fresh dill

1. In a large skillet, heat oil over medium heat. Add onion, and cook, stirring occasionally, until beginning to soften, 1 to 2 minutes. Add garlic, salt, and pepper; cook until fragrant and onions are translucent, 2 to 3 minutes. Transfer to a large bowl.
2. Add spinach to onion mixture, and stir until combined. Add feta, basil, Parmesan, dill, eggs, and lemon zest. Stir until combined.
3. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
4. Unfold phyllo pastry, and cover with parchment paper and a damp cloth to keep phyllo from drying out while you work. Place 1 sheet of phyllo on prepared pan, and brush with melted butter. Repeat with 2 sheets of phyllo, brushing each with melted butter. Place fourth sheet of phyllo perpendicular to last, creating a "+" shape. Layer 2 more sheets of phyllo on top, brushing each with melted butter. Place seventh sheet of phyllo to create beginning of an "X" over the "+." Brush top with melted butter, and layer 2 more sheets of phyllo on top, brushing each with melted butter. Repeat with 3 more sheets to finish the "X" shape on the other side (12 sheets of phyllo total).
5. Spoon spinach mixture into center of phyllo sheets in pan; pat into an 8-inch circle. Fold excess phyllo over spinach mixture, using parchment to help lift phyllo as needed. Layer remaining 3 sheets of phyllo on top of pie to cover filling, brushing a layer of melted butter in between each. Drizzle top with any remaining melted butter.
6. Bake until phyllo is golden brown, about 45 minutes. Garnish with basil and dill, if desired. Serve warm or at room temperature.

BOUGATSA

Makes 1 (9-inch) pie

This Greek custard pie is a crisp, creamy treat that can be found at nearly every corner bakery and café in Greece. Made with flaky layers of phyllo surrounding a velvety vanilla and cinnamon custard, this classic breakfast treat is dusted with confectioners' sugar and cinnamon for a touch of sweet spice and contrast to the gorgeously golden phyllo below.

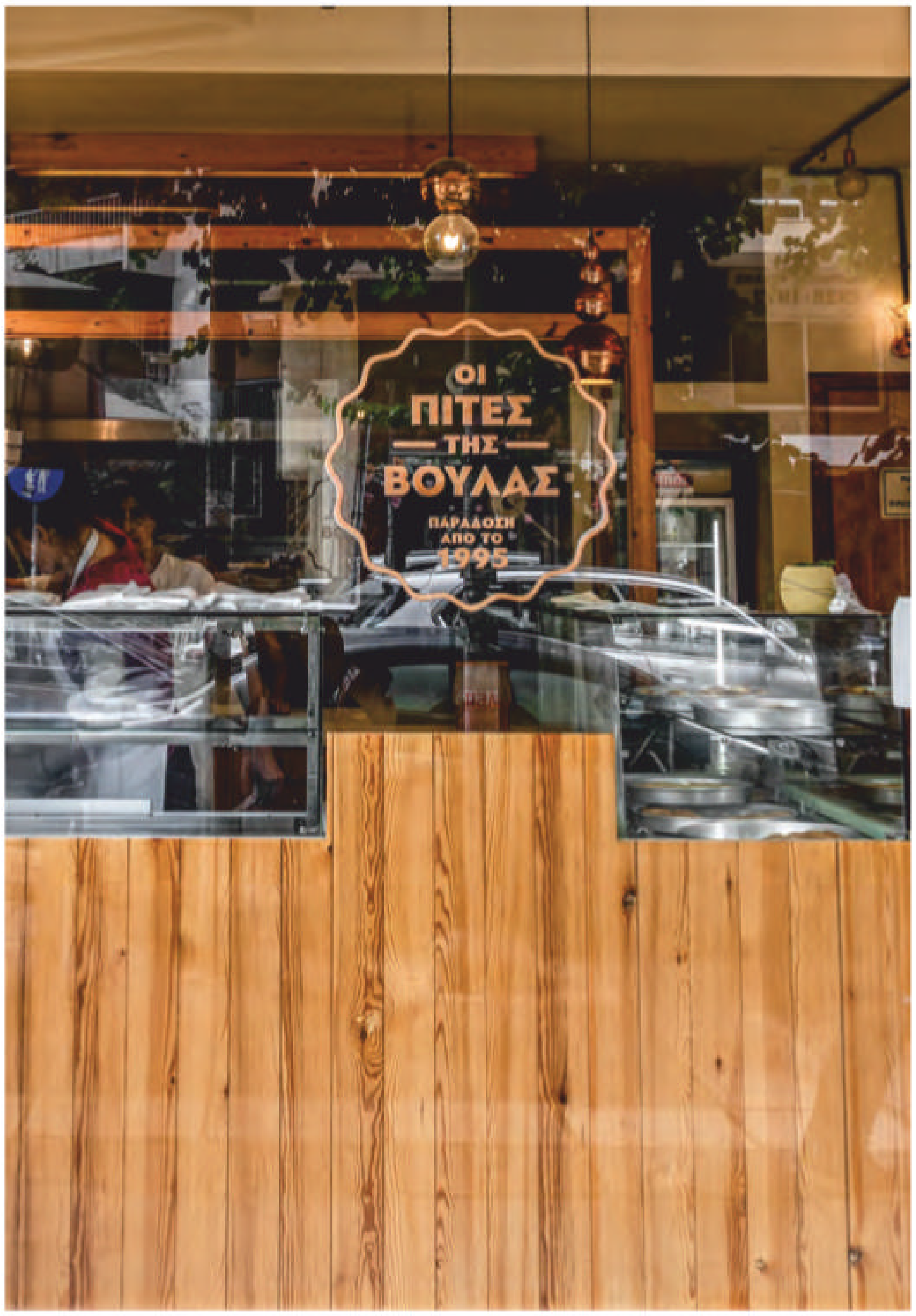
¾ cup (150 grams) granulated sugar, divided
4 large eggs (200 grams), room temperature
6 tablespoons (48 grams) cornstarch
1½ teaspoons (4.5 grams) kosher salt
3 cups (720 grams) whole milk, room temperature
2 teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract*
1½ teaspoons (3 grams) ground cinnamon
½ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, melted
12 to 15 sheets (about 150 to 188 grams) phyllo pastry, thawed according to package directions
Garnish: confectioners' sugar, ground cinnamon

1. In a medium bowl, whisk together ½ cup (100 grams) granulated sugar, eggs, cornstarch, and salt.
2. In a small saucepan, whisk together milk and remaining ¼ cup (50 grams) granulated sugar. Heat over medium-high heat, stirring frequently, until steaming, 4 to 5 minutes. (Do not boil.) Slowly pour half of hot milk mixture into egg mixture, whisking constantly. Add egg mixture to remaining hot milk mixture in pan; add vanilla and cinnamon, whisking until combined. Bring to a boil, whisking constantly, and cook for 2 minutes. Remove from heat, and strain through a fine-mesh sieve, discarding any solids.
3. Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C). Line a 9-inch square baking pan with parchment paper, letting excess extend over sides of pan.
4. Lay 1 sheet of phyllo in prepared pan so it covers bottom of pan and hangs over one edge of pan; brush with melted butter. Place another sheet of phyllo directly on top. Repeat procedure with 2 more sheets of phyllo but hanging over edge of opposite side of pan. Repeat procedure for final two sides of pan for a total of 8 sheets stacked, 2 overlapping each side. Pour custard into phyllo; fold excess phyllo over to envelop custard. Brush top with melted butter. Scrunch and crinkle remaining sheets of phyllo to create folds and waves, and place on top of pie, covering entire surface. (Rip or tear sheets as needed.) Drizzle remaining melted butter on top of pie.
5. Bake until phyllo is golden brown, 25 to 30 minutes. Let cool in pan for at least 15 minutes. Using excess parchment as handles, remove from pan. When ready to serve, garnish with confectioners' sugar and cinnamon, if desired. Best served warm.

**We used Rodelle Pure Vanilla Extract.*

The most famous pastry in Thessaloniki is *bougatsa*, a pie made with layered sheets of phyllo dough on the top and bottom to sandwich creamy custard thickened with a bit of semolina flour. It's generously dusted with confectioners' sugar or cinnamon, cut into bite-size squares, and served hot "to-go" on parchment paper. We stopped by local favorite **Bougatsa Giannis**, which is located down by the White Tower of Thessaloniki. In addition to the traditional semolina custard version, they also had bougatsa filled with rich Nutella.

We ventured on to **Oi Pites Tis Voulas** and watched as whisper-thin sheets of phyllo were spread with butter and layered by hand to create both sweet and savory traditional pies at an incredible rate. The pies go fast, so they are frequently served fresh and warm. The crispy crust of the buttery phyllo contrasts well with the savory spinach (spanakopita) filling as well as the custard found in sweet varieties. There's no English on the shop sign, making it a bit difficult to find without a Greek speaker present; look for the "1995" on the logo! I recommend taking the pies to the adjacent Agia Sofia Square for a little picnic and people-watching.



ΤΙΜΟΚΑΤΑΛΟΓΟΣ
ΚΟΥΡΟΥ ΚΟΤΟΠΙΤΑΚΙ 0,80
ΚΟΥΡΟΥ ΤΥΡΟΠΙΤΑΚΙ 0,80
ΤΡΑΓΑΝΗ ΤΥΡΟΠΙΤΑ 2,50

We were told we absolutely must visit **Terkenlis**, located on the corner of Aristotelous Square. It's a beautiful open bakery, bedecked with lines of glass cases filled with Greek pastries. Popular throughout Greece and Macedonia, this small chain started in Thessaloniki back in 1948. The bakery is most well known for its *tsoureki*, a Greek bread similar to brioche, with a braided shape to represent the Holy Trinity, and eaten at Greek Easter celebrations, but of course, it is enjoyed year-round. Since we couldn't decide between two flavors, Brian and I opted for a smaller version of each. The first was coated in white chocolate and filled with chestnut cream. The other was coated in milk chocolate and stuffed with more chocolate. The melty coating was quite messy but wonderfully balanced the airy texture of the bread.

Τερκενλής
1948

Τσουρέκια
Τσουρέκι πλεξούδα
Τσουρέκι γεμιστό γλασαρισμένο

Ζαχαροπλαστείον
Γ. Ελενίδη
από το 1960

Buzzing with energy from all the sugar, we were able to get to all the stops on our pastry tour by foot; Thessaloniki is a very walkable city. Next up on our list was **Trigona Elenidi**, a family-run bakery making *trigona*, flaky cones made from shatteringly crisp phyllo dough coated in a sweet, sticky honey syrup and filled to order with a rich and velvety pastry cream. Filling the pastries to order keeps them extra crisp (though messy). While some places use whipped cream as a filling, the cone is traditionally filled with pastry cream similar to the filling of bougatsa.

PATOUDA

Makes 24 pastries

Most notably served as an Easter treat on the Greek island of Crete, patouda *combine crisp, tender pastry with a spiced filling made of toasted nuts and seeds, sweet and chewy dates, and honey. Best served with a healthy dusting of confectioners' sugar and a strong cup of coffee, it's no wonder these sweets are regularly served outside of Easter celebrations, too.*

⅓	cup (80 grams) warm water
¼	teaspoon (1.25 grams) baking soda
⅔	cup (149 grams) olive oil
5	tablespoons (60 grams) granulated sugar, divided
2	tablespoons (30 grams) raki (see Note)
1	large egg yolk (19 grams), room temperature
¾	teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt, divided
3	cups (375 grams) all-purpose flour
⅓	cup (32 grams) walnuts, toasted
¼	cup (36 grams) blanched almonds, toasted
2	tablespoons (18 grams) sesame seeds, toasted
¼	cup (56 grams) pitted and finely chopped dates
½	teaspoon (1 gram) ground cinnamon
¼	teaspoon ground nutmeg
3	tablespoons (45 grams) water, divided
2	tablespoons (42 grams) honey
1	large egg (50 grams)

Garnish: confectioners' sugar

1. In a small bowl, place ⅓ cup (80 grams) warm water; add baking soda, whisking to dissolve. Transfer to a large bowl, and add oil, 3 tablespoons (36 grams) granulated sugar, raki, egg yolk, and ½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) salt; whisk until combined. Gradually add flour, stirring with a wooden spoon or spatula until combined and a soft dough forms. Knead once or twice to ensure dough is completely combined and smooth. Wrap in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for at least 1 hour.
2. In the work bowl of a food processor, pulse walnuts, almonds, and sesame seeds until coarsely ground. Transfer to a large heatproof bowl, and stir in dates, cinnamon, nutmeg, and remaining ¼ teaspoon salt until combined.
3. In a small saucepan, heat 2 tablespoons (30 grams) water, honey, and remaining 2 tablespoons (24 grams) granulated sugar over medium heat, stirring constantly, until sugar dissolves. Bring to a boil without stirring. Remove from heat; stir in nut mixture to form a paste. Transfer to same heatproof bowl, and let cool completely.
4. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.
5. In a small bowl, lightly whisk together egg and remaining 1 tablespoon (15 grams) water.
6. On a lightly floured surface, roll dough to ⅛-inch thickness. Using a 3-inch round cutter, cut dough, rerolling scraps as necessary. Place 1 teaspoon (7 grams) cooled nut mixture in center of 1 pastry round. Lightly brush edges with egg wash; fold so edges of pastry meet to cover filling. Press edges together; using a fork, firmly press edges to seal. Repeat with remaining dough and remaining nut mixture. Place at least 1½ inches apart on prepared pans. Lightly brush surface of each pastry with egg wash.
7. Bake until golden and set, about 25 minutes. Let cool completely on pans. Garnish with confectioners' sugar, if desired. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

Note: *Raki is an alcoholic drink made with grape pomace, often flavored with aniseed. The national drink of both Turkey and the Grecian island of Crete (here it's referred to as tsikoudia), the spirit sits at about a 45% alcohol content. Often served as an aperitif, raki can be found at select stores that sell liquor.*

Choureál, just off the popular shopping street Tsimiki, focuses on profiteroles made to order. The Greek iteration of the profiterole is a deconstructed version of the classic French dessert of baked balls of choux pastry filled with *crème pâtissière*. At this shop, you choose from a variety of flavors of custard or ice cream, plus toppings like nuts and fresh fruit to layer with the choux pastry. Brian and I shared a cup filled with bitter chocolate and caramel custard, tart cherries, and almonds.

We left Thessaloniki inspired by the numerous uses of phyllo dough and feta at the bakeries we visited, from the sweet to the savory! Anyone with a love for food, history, and beautiful weather by the sea is sure to feel right at home in the streets of this gorgeous Greek city.

GO THERE:

Bougatsa Giannis
Mitropoleos 106,
Thessaloniki

Oi Pites Tis Voulas
P. Mela 48,
Thessaloniki

Terkenlis
Tsimiski 30,
Thessaloniki

Trigona Elenidi
Dim. Gounari 13,
Thessaloniki

Choureál
Palaion Patron
Germanou 7,
Thessaloniki

HARMONY OF HERBS

FILLED WITH BRIGHT, FRESH HERBS AND BAKED TO GOLDEN-BROWN PERFECTION, THESE SAVORY BAKES ARE THE ULTIMATE ADDITION TO YOUR SPRINGTIME FEASTS. WHETHER YOU WANT TO BAKE SIMPLE AND CLASSY WITH OUR CHÈVRE AND HERB QUICK BREAD OR COMFORTING AND TRADITIONAL WITH OUR CHICKEN POT PIE DANISH, WE'VE GOT THE BEST MIX FOR YOUR TABLE.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY
KYLE CARPENTER
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AMANDA STABILE
FOOD STYLING BY
KATIE MOON DICKERSON
STYLING BY
MARY BETH JONES

Chèvre and Herb
Quick Bread
page 102

SAGE BROWNED BUTTER BISCUITS

Makes 12 biscuits

These aren't your average buttermilk biscuits. This Sage Browned Butter Biscuits recipe is the ultimate savory bake. Using browned butter infused with sage to create flaky, fluffy layers and cold buttermilk for a tangy richness, these biscuits are a perfect side for any meal. Top the golden-brown rounds with flaked sea salt and slather with softened butter for a beautiful, tasty finish.

1¼ cups (284 grams) unsalted butter
1 tablespoon (4 grams) packed fresh sage leaves
3¾ cups (469 grams) all-purpose flour
2 tablespoons (24 grams) granulated sugar
1 tablespoon (15 grams) baking powder
1 tablespoon (9 grams) kosher salt
1 teaspoon (2 grams) garlic powder
½ teaspoon (2.5 grams) baking soda
1 cup (240 grams) cold whole buttermilk
1 large egg (50 grams), lightly beaten
1 tablespoon (15 grams) water
Flaked sea salt, to taste
Softened butter, to serve

1. In a light-colored medium saucepan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add sage, and cook, stirring frequently, until milk solids at bottom have turned a deep amber color and butter is fragrant, 8 to 10 minutes. Pour into a shallow heatproof baking dish, and refrigerate until solid, at least 30 minutes.
2. Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
3. In the work bowl of a food processor, pulse flour, sugar, baking powder, kosher salt, garlic powder, and baking soda until combined. Add firm browned butter, and pulse just until butter resembles small peas and mixture is crumbly. Add cold buttermilk, and pulse until a shaggy dough forms.
4. Turn out dough onto a lightly floured surface. (Dough will be crumbly and almost dry.) Pat dough into a rectangle about 1 inch thick, and cut into fourths. Stack fourths on top of each other, and pat down into a rectangle. Repeat procedure 3 times. Pat or roll dough to ¾-inch thickness. Using a 2½-inch round cutter dipped in flour, cut dough without twisting cutter, rerolling scraps as necessary. (To reroll scraps, stack pieces on top of each other, and pat to ¾-inch thickness.). Place 2 inches apart on prepared pan. Refrigerate until cold, about 10 minutes.
5. In a small bowl, whisk together egg and 1 tablespoon (15 grams) water. Brush biscuits with egg wash, and season with sea salt.
6. Bake until golden brown, 15 to 18 minutes. Serve warm with softened butter.

HERBES DE PROVENCE NO-KNEAD BREAD

Makes 1 loaf

Our soft, rustic Herbes de Provence No-Knead Bread comes together effortlessly without kneading! A fragrant blend of herbs combines with a simple yeasted dough to produce the ultimate make-ahead bread ready for an overnight rise. Baked until the crust is golden brown, the crumb will come out beautifully springy and tender. This chewy bread will have everyone reaching for more.

3	**cups (381 grams) bread flour**
1	**cup (130 grams) whole wheat flour**
2	**tablespoons (5 grams) herbes de Provence (see Notes)**
1	**tablespoon (9 grams) kosher salt**
2¼	**teaspoons (7 grams) instant yeast**
1¾	**cups plus 2 tablespoons (450 grams) warm water (105°F/41°C to 110°F/43°C)**

1. In a large bowl, combine flours, herbes de Provence, salt, and yeast. Add 1¾ cups plus 2 tablespoons (450 grams) warm water, and stir until water is fully incorporated and a sticky dough forms. Cover and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°F/24°C) for 2 hours.
2. Refrigerate dough for at least 2 hours, preferably overnight.
3. Turn out dough onto a lightly floured surface, and gently press dough just to level and even it out. Starting on left side of dough and working clockwise, fold edges of dough toward center, pressing lightly. Turn dough ball over, and using both hands, cup dough and pull it toward you. Rotate dough 90 degrees, and repeat until you have a smooth, tight, sealed round.
4. Heavily dust a sheet of parchment paper with bread flour; place dough, seam side down, on prepared parchment. Cover and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°F/24°C) for 1 hour.
5. When dough has 30 minutes left to rise, place a 6- to 7-quart Dutch oven and lid in a cold oven. Preheat oven to 500°F (260°C).
6. Using a lame or sharp knife, score bread as desired. (See Notes.) Trim parchment so it extends just 2 to 3 inches from sides of dough.
7. Carefully remove hot Dutch oven from oven, and remove lid; using parchment, quickly place dough in Dutch oven. Cover with lid, and place in oven.
8. Immediately reduce oven temperature to 450°F (230°C). Bake for 25 minutes. Remove lid, and bake until an instant-read thermometer inserted in center registers 190°F (88°C), about 10 minutes more. Immediately remove loaf from Dutch oven, and let cool completely on a wire rack. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

Notes: *To make your own herb blend, combine 2 tablespoons (12 grams) dried rosemary, 2 tablespoons (12 grams) dried thyme, 1 tablespoon (6 grams) dried marjoram, 1 tablespoon (6 grams) dried tarragon, 1 tablespoon (6 grams) dried basil, 2 teaspoons (4 grams) summer savory, and 1 teaspoon (2 grams) dried oregano. You can also add 1 tablespoon (6 grams) dried culinary lavender buds. (Lavender is found in many herb blends in the US but not traditionally found in French blends. Add it if you like an extra floral note!)*

For the best rise and most successful scoring, hold your knife or lame at a 45-degree angle and make quick, decisive movements through the dough. This will minimize any drags or rips through the dough and create the impressive and tall "ear" you see in many professional loaves!

CHÈVRE AND HERB QUICK BREAD

Makes 1 (8½x4½-inch) loaf

Flecked with basil, parsley, and chives, this aromatic Chèvre and Herb Quick Bread will be your favorite savory loaf this spring. Coming together in four simple steps, this bread will be a quick and addicting delight!

2½	**cups (313 grams) all-purpose flour**
1	**tablespoon (12 grams) granulated sugar**
1½	**teaspoons (7.5 grams) baking powder**
1½	**teaspoons (4.5 grams) kosher salt**
½	**teaspoon (1 gram) ground black pepper**
¼	**teaspoon (1.25 grams) baking soda**
1⅓	**cups (320 grams) whole buttermilk, room temperature**
¼	**cup (56 grams) olive oil**
1	**large egg (50 grams), room temperature**
¾	**cup (170 grams) chèvre, crumbled**
½	**cup (12 grams) fresh basil, finely chopped**
½	**cup (12 grams) fresh parsley, finely chopped**
⅓	**cup (8 grams) fresh chives, finely chopped**

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Spray an 8½x4½-inch loaf pan with baking spray with flour. Line pan with parchment paper, letting excess extend over sides of pan.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, sugar, baking powder, salt, pepper, and baking soda.
3. In a large bowl, whisk together buttermilk, oil, and egg. Add cheese and herbs. Fold in flour mixture until just combined. (Do not overmix.) Pour batter into prepared pan.
4. Bake until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean and an instant-read thermometer inserted in center registers 200°F (93°C), 55 minutes to 1 hour. Let cool in pan for at least 10 minutes. Using excess parchment as handles, remove from pan, and let cool completely on a wire rack. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

CHICKEN POT PIE DANISH

Makes 8 Danish

If you're looking for soul-satisfying flavor, you've found the right recipe. Filled with earthy vegetables and bright minced garlic, each bite packs an explosion of flavor. Delicious shredded chicken combines with a creamy sauce accented with fresh herbs that add a layer of homey warmth. Surrounded by Rough Puff Pastry, our Chicken Pot Pie Danish will be your new favorite comfort food.

Rough Puff Pastry (recipe follows)

1	**large egg (50 grams)**
1	**tablespoon (15 grams) water**
¼	**cup (56 grams) unsalted butter**
⅓	**cup (53 grams) diced carrot**
¼	**cup (35 grams) diced white onion**
2	**cloves garlic (4 grams), minced**
¼	**cup (31 grams) all-purpose flour**
½	**cup (120 grams) chicken stock**
⅓	**cup (90 grams) whole milk**
2	**teaspoons (6 grams) kosher salt**
2	**teaspoons (2 grams) fresh rosemary, finely chopped**
1	**teaspoon (2 grams) ground black pepper**
1	**teaspoon fresh thyme leaves**
2½	**cups (290 grams) shredded cooked chicken**
½	**cup (73 grams) fresh or thawed frozen peas**

1. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.
2. On a lightly floured surface, roll Rough Puff Pastry into a 16-inch square. Trim edges just to make a straight square. Cut into 16 squares (roughly 4x4 inches each). Place 8 squares on prepared pans. Using a 2½-inch round cutter, cut circles from center of remaining squares.
3. In a small bowl, whisk together egg and 1 tablespoon (15 grams) water. Brush whole squares lightly with egg wash, and top each with a square with a cutout. Brush with egg wash. Refrigerate for at least 20 minutes.
4. Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C).
5. In a medium saucepan, melt butter over medium heat; add carrot and onion, and cook, stirring occasionally, until carrot is softened and onion is translucent, 5 to 7 minutes. Add garlic, and cook until fragrant, 1 to 2 minutes. Add flour, and cook, stirring constantly, for about 1 minute. Slowly stir in stock and milk until no lumps of flour remain. Stir in salt, rosemary, pepper, and thyme. Cook until sauce is thickened, about 1 minute. Remove from heat. Stir in chicken and peas.
6. Using a fork, evenly dock bottom of Danish just within circle.
7. Bake until beginning to puff, about 10 minutes. Carefully spoon ¼ cup (72 grams) filling into center of each Danish. Bake until golden, 8 to 10 minutes more. Let cool on pans for about 10 minutes. Best served warm. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 3 days.*

**To reheat, place pastries on a parchment lined baking sheet; cover with foil. Bake at 350°F (180°C) until warmed through, 5 to 10 minutes.*

ROUGH PUFF PASTRY

Makes enough for 8 Danish

1⅔	**cups (377 grams) cold unsalted butter, cubed**
3	**cups (375 grams) all-purpose flour**
1	**tablespoon (9 grams) kosher salt**
⅔	**cup (160 grams) ice water**

1. Freeze butter until firm, 15 to 20 minutes.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat cold butter, flour, and salt at low speed just until butter is coated with flour. With mixer on low speed, add ⅔ cup (160 grams) ice water in a slow, steady stream, beating just until dough comes together, about 1 minute, stopping to scrape sides of bowl and turn dough to help dough hydrate evenly. (There will still be large pieces of butter. It is OK if a few dry bits remain). (See PRO TIP.)
3. Turn out dough onto a lightly floured surface, and roll into a 9-inch square. Wrap in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for 45 minutes to 1 hour.
4. On a lightly floured surface, roll dough into an 18x10-inch rectangle, lightly flouring work surface and top of dough as needed. Fold dough in thirds like a letter. Rotate dough 90 degrees; roll into an 18x10-inch rectangle, and fold in thirds like a letter. Repeat procedure once. Wrap dough in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for at least 1 hour. (If at any point the butter is too soft after a fold, wrap in plastic wrap, and freeze until butter is firm again, checking every 5 minutes).

PRO TIP

To make your rough puff in a food processor, freeze butter until firm, 15 to 20 minutes. In the work bowl of a food processor, pulse flour and salt until combined. Add cold butter, and pulse just until butter is coated with flour and butter pieces are nickel-size, 2 to 3 times. Add ⅔ cup (160 grams) ice water, and process just until mixture starts to come together and no dry flour remains. Proceed with recipe from step 3.

Baklava

A WIDELY CONTESTED CONFECTION THAT'S OUTLASTED EMPIRES AND EVOLVED OVER CENTURIES

BY CHESSA PARKER

With a dessert this crisp and flaky, it's no wonder so many countries claim to be the originators. Typically made with phyllo dough, sweet syrup, nuts, and butter, baklava bakes into a gorgeously golden, flaky pastry full of rich, honeyed flavor and an irresistible blend of textures. The layers of nuts add a crunch and warm, earthy flavor to each bite, while the sticky sweet syrup tenderizes and softens each layer. Traditionally, baklava is given at least 30 to 40 layers, and beneath each layer is a storied history.

The full history of this sweet, layered dessert is widely disputed, along with the origins of its name, but Turkey and Greece are among the top countries credited with its invention. However, baklava as we know it today is a far cry from its ancient origin. An expensive and extremely time-consuming treat, baklava remained associated with the wealthy until the fall of the Ottoman Empire. Now, with baklava widely adored and more accessible than ever, each country that comes in contact with this delicious treat can't help but try to claim a piece of it.

Some trace baklava's origin back to an unleavened flatbread that was layered with chopped nuts and honey from the 8th century BC, during the Assyrian Empire. Another ancestor is the ancient Roman placenta cake, which is made of thin sheets of pastry, layered with cheese and honey, and flavored with bay leaves. This Roman cake dates back to the 2nd century BC, and its name comes from the Greek word *plakous*, meaning "thin, layered flatbreads." Another earlier form of baklava was found under the name *güllach*, a pastry made of thin dough cakes that are filled with nuts and sugar, in a Chinese workbook that was written in 1330 under the reign of the Yuan (Mongol) dynasty. This dessert came about from Muslim merchants traveling through central Asia and bringing with them traditional desserts and recipes. However, it's believed that Assyrians of Mesopotamia, a region comprised of modern-day Iraq, Syria, Iran, and Turkey, were the most likely original creators of baklava. Greek sailors and merchants visited Mesopotamia frequently and brought the recipe for what we know today as baklava to rich Greek households by the 3rd century BC. The Greeks are given credit for improving the recipe during this time, specifically by rolling the dough to an extremely thin point, an important characteristic of modern-day baklava. The dough was then named *phyllo* (filo), which is the Greek word for "leaf," in reference to the thinness of the dough.

Phyllo was originally made with just three ingredients—flour, water, and salt—and the dough was mixed and kneaded by hand. Making phyllo by hand can often take hours, as the dough is stretched and pulled until it is thin enough to read through. At this point, the dough needs to dry slightly before it is folded multiple times upon itself. Today, phyllo is typically mixed by a mixer and then flattened and stretched by a roller machine, making it easier to mass-produce. Phyllo dough is versatile and can be used in many different sweet and savory treats, such as *galaktoboureko*, a Greek semolina custard pastry; *portokalopita*, a Greek orange cake; *bougatsa*, a Greek breakfast pastry made with cheese, custard, or minced meat; and spanakopita, a Greek pastry filled with spinach and feta cheese. Phyllo dough can also be shredded, making it a deliciously crunchy base for many Middle Eastern and Mediterranean desserts. When phyllo dough is shredded, it is called *tel kadayif* in Turkey.

Baklava as we know it was developed and perfected under the Ottoman Empire, which lasted from the 14th century until 1922. During this period, the uniqueness and creativity of the baklava at the time was destroyed as the focus shifted toward creating a single, perfect recipe, with innovation and variation giving way to recipe streamlining and standardization. The recipe was perfected as all the empire's best chefs began working together. The modern-day version was created in the kitchens of the Topkapı Palace, where sultans of the Ottoman Empire lived and presented trays of baklava to each Janissary regiment, the military of the Ottoman Empire, every 15th of Ramadan as a ceremonial procession named the Baklava Alayı. This tradition was specifically attributed to Suleiman the Magnificent, a sultan who ruled during the 16th century, who would present the baklava to the Janissaries. Following the presentation, the soldiers would return to their barracks in a parade known as the Baklava Procession. After the fall of the Ottoman Empire, that perfected recipe for baklava spread across Europe and beyond.

Often served at celebrations like Christmas and Easter, the baklava is layered with 40 sheets of phyllo dough to represent the 40 days of Lent and is also used to celebrate Middle Eastern Rosh Hashanah and Purim, but it can also be served throughout the year outside of these special celebrations. There is no singular way to create baklava, as every country has its own variations. Arabic recipes add rosewater and cardamom, while Armenians use cloves and cinnamon. Serbian pastry chefs make it with at least 100 layers. Sephardic Jews do not serve it as a dark-colored pastry, such as when it is made with walnuts, on Rosh Hashanah because that would foreshadow a dark year ahead. To avoid this, the Sephardim use blanched almonds. In Greece, the dessert is made with exactly 33 layers to represent Christ's life.

There are still bakers and bakeries that want to showcase the diverse and delicious treat, many still creating the phyllo dough by hand. For a genuine Greek baklava, check out Mastiha, an artisan Greek bakery located in Rockville, Maryland. Mastiha was specifically created with the longing to highlight baklava. On the other side of the world, one of the most famous locations for baklava is found in Istanbul, Turkey. Karaköy Güllüoğlu is a favorite in the city, showcasing an array of baklavas that can be delivered all over the world.

Baklava has a beautiful and unique history, making it a treasured treat with influences from around the world. Prized and loved by many, baklava is layered with a history so rich you can practically taste it.

BAKLAVA

Makes about 40 servings

Crispy, flaky, and layered with spice, this baklava recipe comes together in a snap. Crunchy nuts are mixed with fragrant spices to create rich layers between the phyllo dough. Packaged phyllo dough makes this recipe effortless while still achieving the paper-thin layers that make baklava so unique. Honey Syrup is poured over the entire treat, lending to its sweet flavor and sticky texture. Decorated with ground pistachios for a hint of bright green, this dessert is positively irresistible.

1⅓	**cups (186 grams) skinned hazelnuts**
1⅓	**cups (172 grams) pistachios**
1⅓	**cups (128 grams) walnuts**
2½	**tablespoons (30 grams) granulated sugar**
1½	**teaspoons (3 grams) ground cinnamon**
½	**teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt**
¼	**teaspoon ground cloves**
1	**(16-ounce) package frozen phyllo pastry, thawed according to package directions**
2½	**cups (567 grams) clarified butter, melted and cooled slightly**

Honey Syrup (recipe follows)
Garnish: ground pistachios

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).
2. In the work bowl of a food processor, pulse hazelnuts, pistachios, walnuts, sugar, cinnamon, salt, and cloves until finely ground.
3. Unfold phyllo, and remove plastic wrapping. Cover entirely with a sheet of parchment paper and damp kitchen towels or paper towels to prevent phyllo from drying out.
4. Using a pastry brush, generously brush bottom of a 13x9-inch baking pan with clarified butter. Carefully place 1 phyllo sheet in prepared pan, and lightly brush with butter. Repeat with 8 phyllo sheets, brushing each sheet with butter, for a total of 9 sheets as a base layer. Sprinkle about one-fourth of nut mixture (1 cup or 128 grams) evenly over top layer. Repeat layering procedure with 9 sheets of phyllo and melted butter. Sprinkle one-fourth of nut mixture over top layer. Repeat procedure twice with phyllo (18 sheets total), melted butter, and remaining nut mixture. (You should have a total of 4 layers of phyllo sheets and 4 layers of nut mixture.) Top with final 6 sheets of phyllo, brushing each liberally with melted butter. Using your hands, flatten top layer of pastry as needed; brush final layer with melted butter. Using a sharp knife, carefully slice into 2x1½-inch diamonds. Pour any remaining melted butter evenly on top.
5. Bake until golden and flaky, 40 to 45 minutes, rotating pan halfway through baking. Immediately pour Honey Syrup over entire pastry, making sure to get in cracks and between each piece. Let cool on a wire rack for at least 2 hours; cover with foil, and let stand for at least 4 hours or up to overnight. Garnish with ground pistachios, if desired. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

Honey Syrup

Makes about 2 cups

1	**cup (336 grams) honey**
⅔	**cup (133 grams) granulated sugar**
⅔	**cup (160 grams) water**
1¾	**teaspoons (9 grams) orange blossom water**
¼	**teaspoon salt**

1. In a medium saucepan, whisk together honey, sugar, ⅔ cup (160 grams) water, orange blossom water, and salt. Bring to a boil over medium heat, stirring occasionally, and cook until sugar completely dissolves, about 5 minutes. Remove from heat, and let cool completely.

A LOVELY SPRING CAKE, NOW A QUICK BREAKFAST TREAT

WHETHER SERVED FOR A SWEET, SIMPLE BREAKFAST OR AS AN AFTERNOON SNACK, THESE HUMMINGBIRD SCONES ARE SURE TO INSPIRE SPRINGTIME DELIGHT IN EVERY BITE

HUMMINGBIRD SCONES

Makes 4 scones

As simple as they are delicious, these Southern classic-inspired scones include every flavor of the beloved cake but in quick bread form. Bursting with fruity banana, lightly tangy pineapple, and toasted, crunchy pecans, these scones balance perfectly between decadence and light, fresh flavors. Finished with a classic Vanilla Cream Cheese Glaze, it'll almost be like eating cake for breakfast, minus the hassle.

1¾	**cups (219 grams) all-purpose flour**
3	**tablespoons (36 grams) granulated sugar**
½	**teaspoon (2.5 grams) baking powder**
1	**teaspoon (2 grams) ground cinnamon**
¾	**teaspoon (2.25 grams) salt**
¼	**teaspoon (1.25 grams) baking soda**
6	**tablespoons (84 grams) cold unsalted butter, cubed**
¼	**cup (60 grams) cold whole buttermilk**
1	**teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract**
½	**cup (114 grams) mashed ripe banana (about 1 medium banana)**
¼	**cup (67 grams) pressed drained crushed pineapple**
½	**cup (57 grams) chopped pecans, toasted**

Vanilla Cream Cheese Glaze (recipe follows)
Garnish: chopped toasted pecans

1. Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. In a large bowl, whisk together flour, sugar, baking powder, cinnamon, salt, and baking soda. Using your hands or a pastry cutter, cut in cold butter until it resembles course crumbs. Make a well in center.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together cold buttermilk and vanilla. Add banana and pineapple. Add buttermilk mixture and chopped pecans to flour mixture, and stir with a spatula until dry ingredients are fully moistened. Knead with your hands once or twice just until dough is smooth and fully hydrated.
4. Turn out dough, and pat into a 6-inch circle. Cut into 4 equal pieces. Place on prepared pan.
5. Bake until golden and an instant-read thermometer inserted in center registers 205°F (96°C), 25 to 30 minutes. Let cool on pan for 10 minutes. Remove from pan, and let cool completely on a wire rack. Spread Vanilla Cream Cheese Glaze on top, and garnish with toasted pecans, if desired. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

VANILLA CREAM CHEESE GLAZE

Makes about ¾ cup

4	**ounces (113 grams) cream cheese, softened**
¼	**cup (30 grams) confectioners' sugar**
2	**tablespoons (30 grams) whole milk**
1	**teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract**

1. In a small bowl, whisk together all ingredients until smooth and pourable.

JESSIE'S TIME-SAVING SPRING CAKES

JESSIE SHARES A CAKE FOR THE CHOCOLATE LOVERS AND A ZESTY BRIGHT LEMON CAKE FOR THOSE LOOKING FOR SOMETHING A LITTLE LIGHTER

Lemon Snacking Cake
with Lemon Glaze
page 113

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JIM BATHIE
RECIPE DEVELOPMENT BY JESSIE SHEEHAN
FOOD STYLING BY KATIE MOON DICKERSON
STYLING BY MARY BETH JONES

Easter Hot Fudge
Pudding Cake
page 113

LEMON SNACKING CAKE WITH LEMON GLAZE

Makes 1 (8-inch) cake

This is the brightest and zippiest of lemon cakes and is a perfect last-minute addition to your Easter dessert spread, as it can be assembled and baked in less than an hour—and if you tuck it into the freezer briefly to quickly bring it down to room temp post-bake, you'll be serving it soon after that. Sour cream is wonderful here, as it provides moisture and tenderness to the cake and its tang plays so scrumptiously with lemon. And there is lots of lemon packed into this little cutie, both in the form of zest and juice and a tiny bit of (optional) lemon extract. Cake flour makes for the lightest and most delicate of crumbs, and the sweet yet pucker-inducing glaze is the perfect finishing touch that zestily shatters with each delicious bite.

1⅓ cups (267 grams) granulated sugar
3 tablespoons (9 grams) lemon zest (about 3 lemons)
½ cup (112 grams) vegetable oil
½ teaspoon (2 grams) vanilla extract
½ teaspoon (2 grams) lemon extract (optional)
1 large egg (50 grams)
1 large egg yolk (19 grams)
3 tablespoons (45 grams) fresh lemon juice (1 to 2 large lemons)
⅔ cup (160 grams) sour cream
1 teaspoon (5 grams) baking powder
½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt
¼ teaspoon (1.25 grams) baking soda
1¾ cups (219 grams) cake flour
Lemon Glaze (recipe follows)

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Butter an 8-inch square baking pan or spray with baking spray with flour. Line pan with parchment paper, letting excess extend over sides of pan.

2. In a large bowl, place sugar; add lemon zest, and rub between fingers into sugar until incorporated. Whisk in oil, vanilla, and lemon extract (if using). Add egg and egg yolk, one at a time, whisking until combined after each addition. Whisk in lemon juice; whisk in sour cream. One at a time, sprinkle baking powder, salt, and then baking soda over mixture, vigorously whisking until combined after each addition. Sift flour over mixture, and gently fold with a flexible spatula until combined. Scrape batter into prepared pan.

3. Bake until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out with a moist crumb or two, 40 to 45 minutes, rotating pan halfway through baking. Let cool completely in pan on a wire rack.

4. Using excess parchment as handles, remove cooled cake from pan, discard parchment, and place cake on wire rack. Starting in center, gently pour Lemon Glaze over cake, spreading with an offset spatula so it drips over edges. Store, tightly wrapped in plastic wrap, for up to 5 days.

LEMON GLAZE

Makes ⅔ cup

1½ cups (180 grams) confectioners' sugar
3 tablespoons (45 grams) fresh lemon juice

1. In a small bowl, whisk together confectioners' sugar and lemon juice until smooth. Use immediately.

EASTER HOT FUDGE PUDDING CAKE

Makes 1 (8-inch) cake

A hot fudge pudding cake—or "self-saucing" cake, as some like to call it—is one of those simple cakes with tremendous bang for the buck. You make a quick chocolate cake batter (that you can easily veganize by substituting non-dairy milk for the cow's milk called for in the recipe), scrape it into the pan, and then pour a sweetened coffee-chocolate mixture on top. Due to some kind of mysterious baking alchemy, while in the oven, the top of the cake firms up like, well, cake while the bottom takes on a loose, pudding-like texture, reminiscent of a very thick hot fudge sauce. The cake is eaten warm and each serving magically (and happily) includes both cake and "sauce." If topped with some melty vanilla ice cream, you may just get the most delicious of brownie sundae vibes. But a generous drizzle of cold heavy cream is my personal favorite. Oh, and a few festive sprinkles overall is very festive and nonnegotiable.

Bottom layer:
1 cup (125 grams) all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons (10 grams) baking powder
½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt
1 cup (200 grams) granulated sugar
6 tablespoons (84 grams) vegetable oil
⅓ cup (25 grams) Dutch process cocoa powder
½ cup (120 grams) whole milk
2 teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract

Top layer:
1¼ cups (300 grams) hot water (120°F/49°C to 130°F/54°C)
¼ cup (24 grams) Dutch process cocoa powder
1½ teaspoons (2 grams) instant espresso powder
½ cup (110 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar

Vanilla ice cream and pastel-colored sprinkles, to serve

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).

2. For bottom layer: In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, and salt, and set aside.

3. In a large bowl, whisk together granulated sugar, oil, and cocoa until well combined; add milk and vanilla, whisking until combined. Whisk in flour mixture until smooth, and scrape batter into an ungreased 8-inch square baking pan.

4. For top layer: In same bowl, whisk together 1¼ cups (300 grams) hot water, cocoa, and espresso powder. Whisk in brown sugar. Gently pour mixture over batter in pan. (Do not mix.)

5. Bake until cake still looks slightly soft and underbaked in center but drier and cake-like around edges and center jiggles when you nudge pan on oven rack, 30 to 35 minutes. Let cool for 10 to 15 minutes if you want a fudgy, sauce-like bottom layer or for 20 to 25 minutes for a slightly more set, pudding-like texture. Serve warm with ice cream and sprinkles. Store, tightly covered with plastic wrap, for up to 3 days.

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